



**Social Science Program  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior**

**Visitor Services Project**

# **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Visitor Study**



**Fall 2004  
Report 162**

 **University of Idaho**  
Park Studies Unit





**Social Science Program  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior**

**Visitor Services Project**

# **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**

## **Visitor Study Fall 2004**

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### **Visitor Services Project Report 162**

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**Visitor Services Project**  
**John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**  
**Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument (NM) during August 29-September 4, 2004. A total of 396 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Visitor groups returned 310 questionnaires for a 78% response rate.
- This report profiles John Day Fossil Beds NM visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Sixty-four percent of visitor groups had two people and 20% were groups of three or four. Sixty-seven percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Most visitors (99%) were not with a guided tour group. Fifty-one percent of visitors were male and 49% were female. Sixty-nine percent of visitors were aged 36-70 years and 12% were children aged 15 years or younger. Most visitor groups (76%) reported that this was the first visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM in their lifetime.
- International visitors from England (18%), Canada (15%), Holland (15%), and seven other countries comprised 6% of the total number of visitors to the park. United States visitors were from Oregon (61%), Washington (14%), California (7%), and 24 other states.
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about John Day Fossil Beds NM through maps/brochures (46%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (35%), and highway signs (33%).
- Thirty percent of visitor groups' primary reason for visiting this part of eastern Oregon was to visit John Day Fossil Beds NM. Viewing scenery (41%), seeing fossils (21%), and visiting Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (14%) were the most common reasons for visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM.
- On this visit, the most common activities that visitor groups participated in were viewing scenery (90%), taking photographs (66%), and visiting Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (61%). Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (63%) and Painted Hills Overlook (54%) were the most visited sites by visitor groups.
- The average visitor group expenditure during this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM was \$108. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of group spent more, 50% spent less) was \$58. The average per capita expenditure was \$50.
- In regard to use, importance, and quality of park services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used visitor services and facilities by the 269 respondents included highway directional signs (87%), visitor center exhibits (60%), and brochure/map (51%). The visitor services and facilities that received the highest combined "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included Thomas Condon Center exhibits (90%, N=152), trail exhibits (82%, N=100), and assistance from park staff (80%, N=93). Assistance from park staff (94%, N=87), Thomas Condon Center exhibits (92%, N=140), and trail exhibits (85%, N= 92), were the services that received the highest combined "good" and "very good" quality ratings.
- Most visitor groups (93%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at John Day Fossil Beds NM as "very good" or "good." Two percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as "very poor" or "poor."

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please visit the University of Idaho VSP  
Park Studies Unit website: [www.psu.uidaho.edu](http://www.psu.uidaho.edu)



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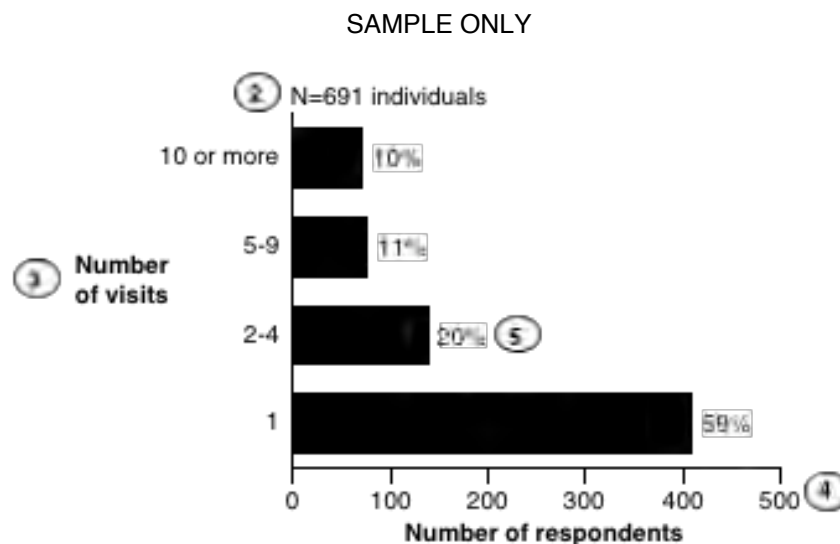


## INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a visitor study at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument (NM). This visitor study was conducted from August 29-September 4, 2004 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), a part of the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho.

The report is organized into four sections. The **Methods** section discusses the procedures and limitations of the study. The **Results** section provides summary information for each question in the questionnaire and includes a summary of visitor comments. An **Additional Analysis** section is included to help managers request additional analyses. The final section includes a copy of the **Questionnaire**. The separate appendix includes comment summaries and visitors' unedited comments.

Most of this report's graphs resemble the example below. The large numbers refer to explanations following the graph.



**Figure 4: Number of visits**

- 1: The figure title describes the graph's information.
- 2: Listed above the graph, the "N" shows the number of individuals or visitor groups responding to the question. Interpret data with an "N" of less than 30 with **CAUTION!** as the results may be unreliable.
- 3: Vertical information describes response categories.
- 4: Horizontal information shows the number of respondents or proportions of respondents in each response category.
- 5: In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.

## METHODS

### Questionnaire design and administration

All VSP questionnaires follow design principles outlined in Don A. Dillman's book *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* (2000). The John Day Fossil Beds NM questionnaire was developed at a workshop held with park staff to design and prioritize the questions. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks; others were customized for John Day Fossil Beds NM. Many questions asked visitors to choose answers from a list that was provided, often with an open-ended question, while others were completely open-ended.

Interviews were conducted, and 396 questionnaires were distributed to a sample of visitor groups who arrived at John Day Fossil Beds NM during the period from August 29-September 4, 2004. Table 1 presents the proportions of questionnaires distributed at each park unit. These locations were selected by park staff and the proportion of questionnaires distributed was based on park visitation statistics.

**Table 1: Sampling plan**

N=number of questionnaires distributed

Park unit	N	%
Sheep Rock	214	54
Painted Hills	115	29
Clarno	67	17
Total	396	100

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, an interview lasting approximately two minutes was used to determine group size, group type, and the age of the group member (at least 16 years of age) who would complete the questionnaire. These individuals were then asked for their names, addresses, and telephone numbers in order to mail them a reminder/thank you postcard and follow-ups if needed. Visitor groups were given a questionnaire and asked to complete it after their visit and then return it by mail. The questionnaires were pre-addressed and stamped.

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder/thank you postcard was mailed to all participants. Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the survey. Seven weeks after the survey, a second round of replacement questionnaires were mailed to visitors who still had not returned their questionnaires.

### Data analysis

Returned questionnaires were coded and the information was entered into a computer using a standard statistical software package—Statistical Analysis System (SAS). Frequency distribution and cross-tabulations were calculated for the coded data and responses to open-ended questions were categorized and summarized.

### Sampling size, missing data, and reporting items

This study collected information on both visitor groups and individual group members. Thus, the sample size ("N") varies from figure to figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows information for 305 visitor groups, Figure 4 presents data for 755 individuals. A note above each graph or table specifies the information illustrated.

Occasionally, a respondent may not have answered all of the questions, or may have answered some incorrectly. Unanswered questions result in missing data and cause the number in the sample to vary from figure to figure. For example, although John Day Fossil Beds NM visitors returned 310 questionnaires, Figure 1 shows data for only 305 respondents.

Questions answered incorrectly due to carelessness, misunderstood directions, and so forth turn up in the data as reporting errors. These create small data inconsistencies.

### Limitations

Like all surveys, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. It is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflect actual behavior. This disadvantage applies to all such studies and is reduced by having visitors fill out the questionnaire soon after they visit the monument.
2. The data reflect visitor use patterns of visitors to the selected sites during the study period of August 29-September 4, 2004. The results do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year.
3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word "**CAUTION!**" is included in the graph, figure, or table.

<b>Special conditions</b>
---------------------------

Weather conditions during the visitor study were varied throughout the survey period ranging from beautiful, warm and sunny days to extremely windy, cold and rainy days. These weather conditions may have affected park visitation between August 29<sup>th</sup> and September 4<sup>th</sup>. In addition, the Painted Hills Festival was being held in Mitchell on September 4<sup>th</sup> resulting in an increase in number of visitors to the Painted Hills Unit. Furthermore, the ranger who helped distribute questionnaires at Clarno Unit on September 1<sup>st</sup> had to leave the site to respond to an emergency request. Thus, the number of questionnaires distributed at Clarno Unit was lower than planned.

The exhibits in the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center, at the time of the survey, were temporary displays. The completion of new exhibits and fossil museum will be in the summer of 2005.

## RESULTS

### Visitor groups contacted

At John Day Fossil Beds NM, 412 visitor groups were contacted and 396 of these groups (96%) accepted questionnaires. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 310 visitor groups, resulting in a 78% response rate for this study.

Table 2 compares age and group size information collected from the total sample of visitors, who participated, with age and group size of visitors who actually returned questionnaires. Based on the variables of respondent age and visitor group size, non-response bias was judged to be insignificant.

**Table 2: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents**

Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Average	N	Average
Age of respondents	378	51.2	295	51.9
Group size	395	2.5	305	2.5

### Demographics

**Group size:** Figure 1 shows visitor group sizes, which ranged from one person to 10 people. Sixty-four percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while another 20% had three or four people.

**Group type:** Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups were made up of family members and 14% traveled with friends (see Figure 2). “Other” group types included partners. One percent of visitor groups visited John Day Fossil Beds NM with a tour group while 99% were not with a tour group (see Figure 3).

**Visitor gender:** Slightly over one-half of visitors (51%) were male and 49% were female, as shown in Figure 4.

**Visitor age:** Sixty-nine percent of visitors were aged 36-70 years and 12% were children under 15 years old (see Figure 5).

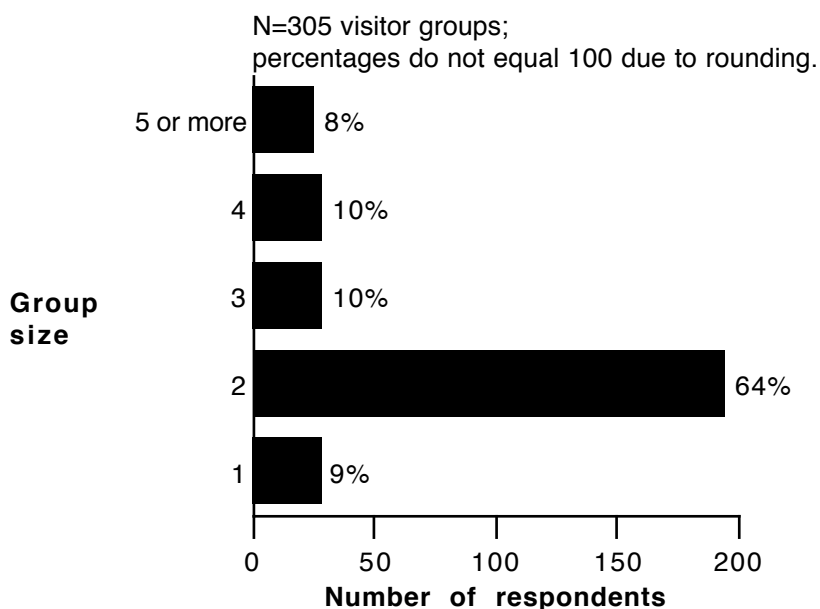
**Number of times visiting John Day Fossils Bed NM:** Most visitors (76%) visited the park for the first time, while 11% visited twice and 8% visited 4 or more times in their lifetime (see Figure 6).

**Visitors with disabilities/impairments:** As shown in Figure 7, most visitor groups (93%) did not have any members with disabilities/impairments that affected their

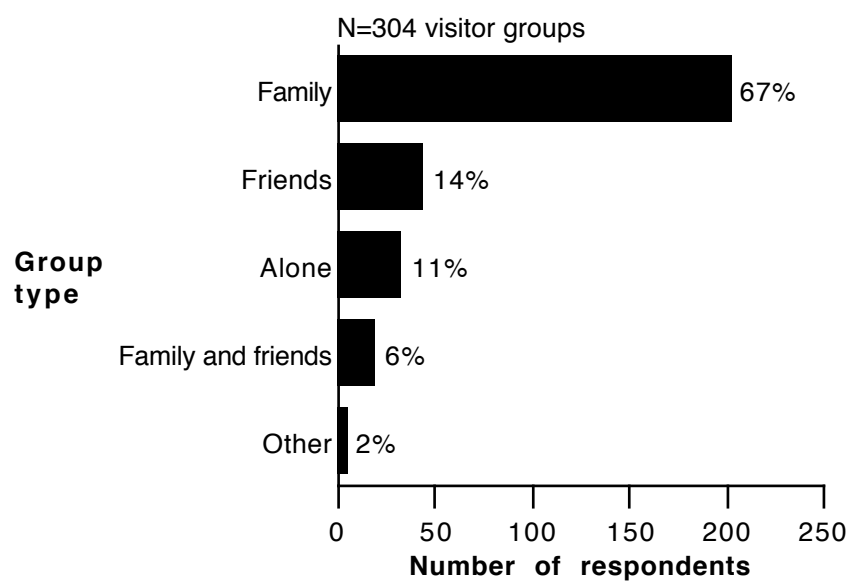
visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM. However, 7% of visitor groups had members with disabilities/impairments. Visitor groups who had members with disabilities/impairments were then asked to report the types of disabilities/impairments. Not enough visitor groups replied to this question to provide reliable data (see Figure 8). Figure 9 shows the proportions of visitor groups who encountered access/service problem because of the disabilities/impairments on this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM area. The problems included no benches along the trail to rest, unable to read trail information signs because they were too low or the print was too small, and unable to walk on steep gravel paths.

**International visitors:** Six percent of visitor groups were international (see Table 3). Eighteen percent of international visitors were from England, 15% were from Canada, another 15% were from Holland, and smaller proportions came from seven other countries.

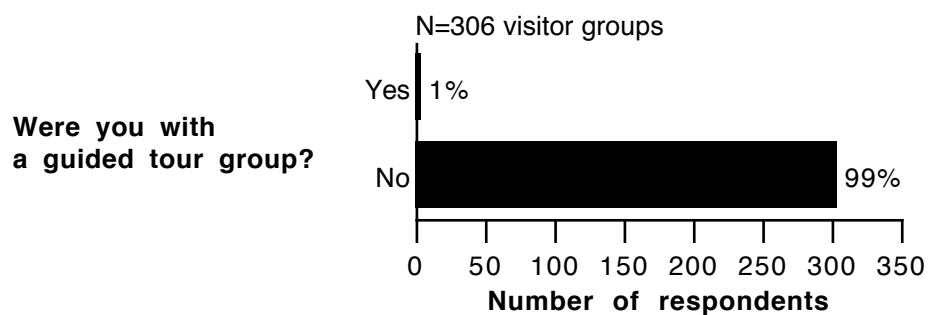
**U.S. visitors:** The largest proportions of United States visitors were from Oregon (61%), Washington (14%), California (7%), as shown in Map 1 and Table 4. Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from 24 other states.



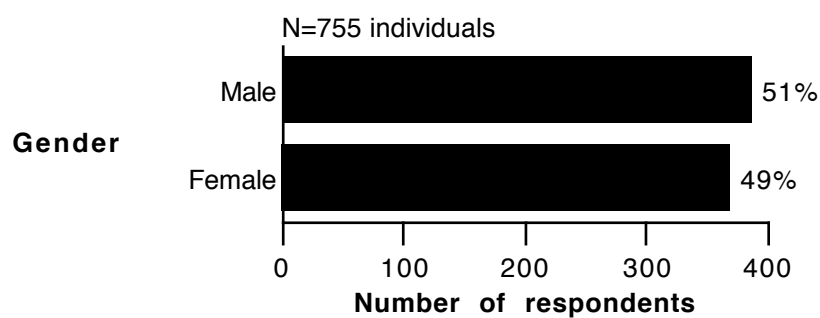
**Figure 1: Visitor group size**



**Figure 2: Visitor group type**



**Figure 3: Visitors traveling with a guided tour group**



**Figure 4: Visitor gender**

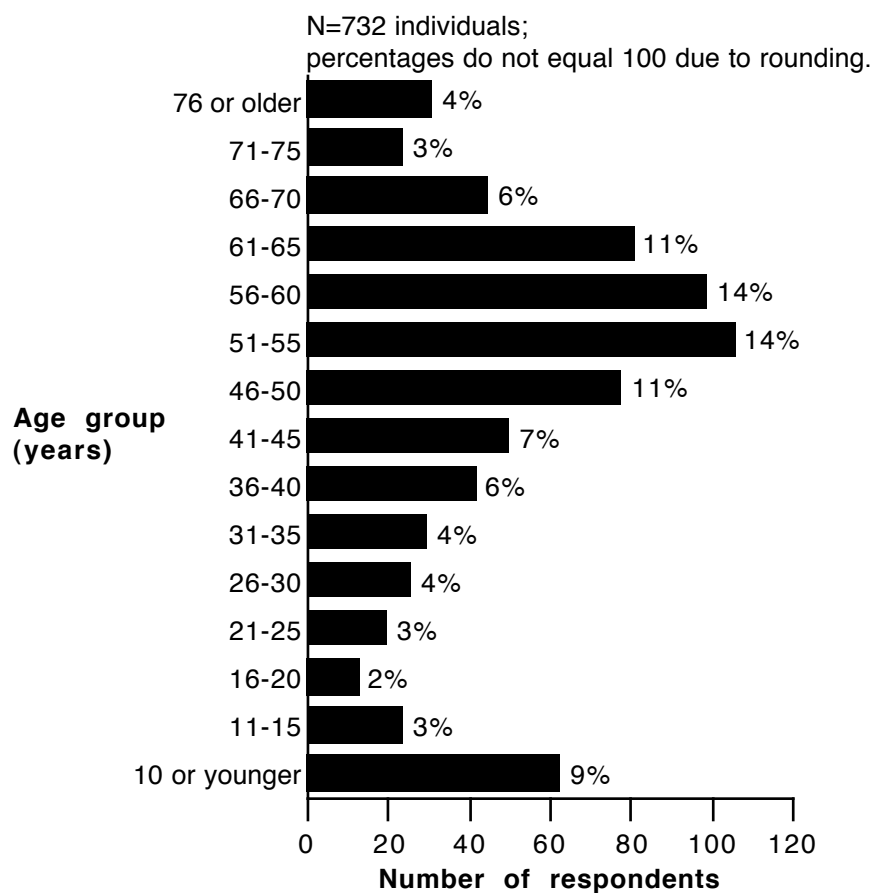


Figure 5: Visitor ages

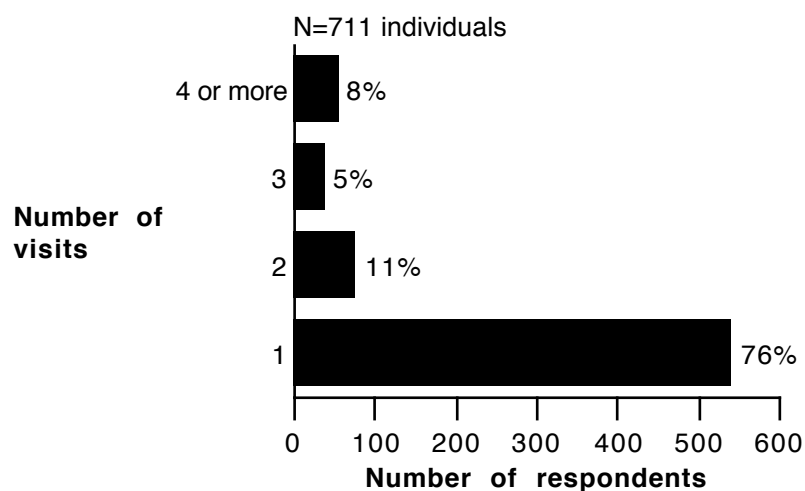
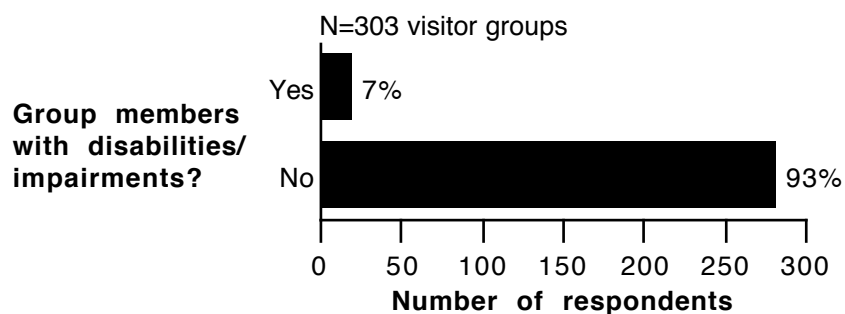
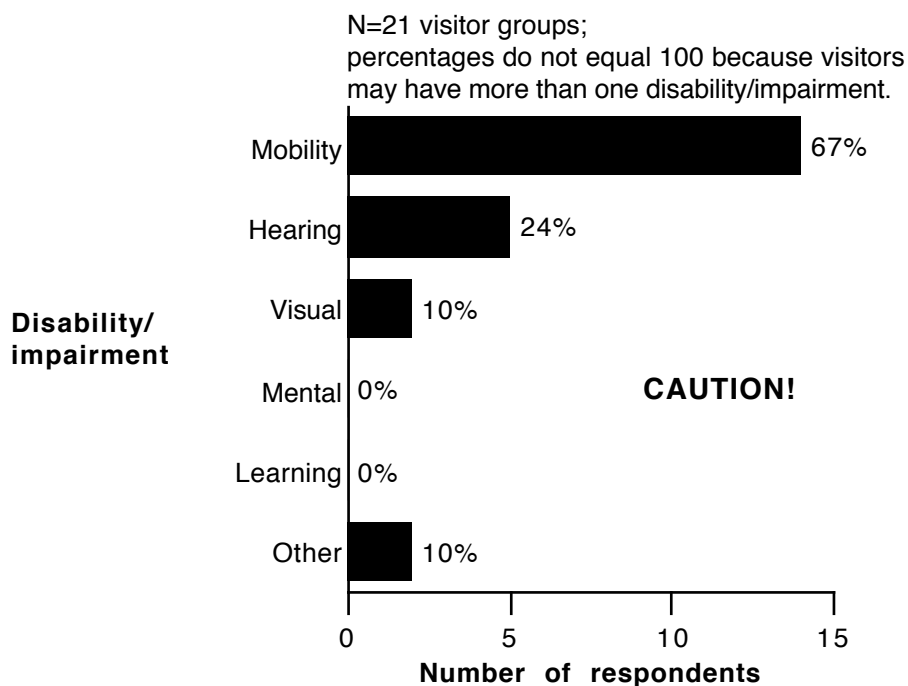


Figure 6: Number of lifetime visits (including this visit)

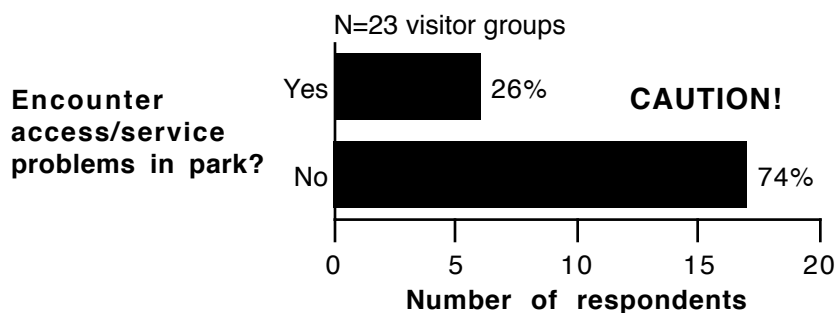




**Figure 7: Visitor groups with disabilities/impairments that limited ability to visit John Day Fossil Beds NM**



**Figure 8: Types of visitor disabilities/impairments**

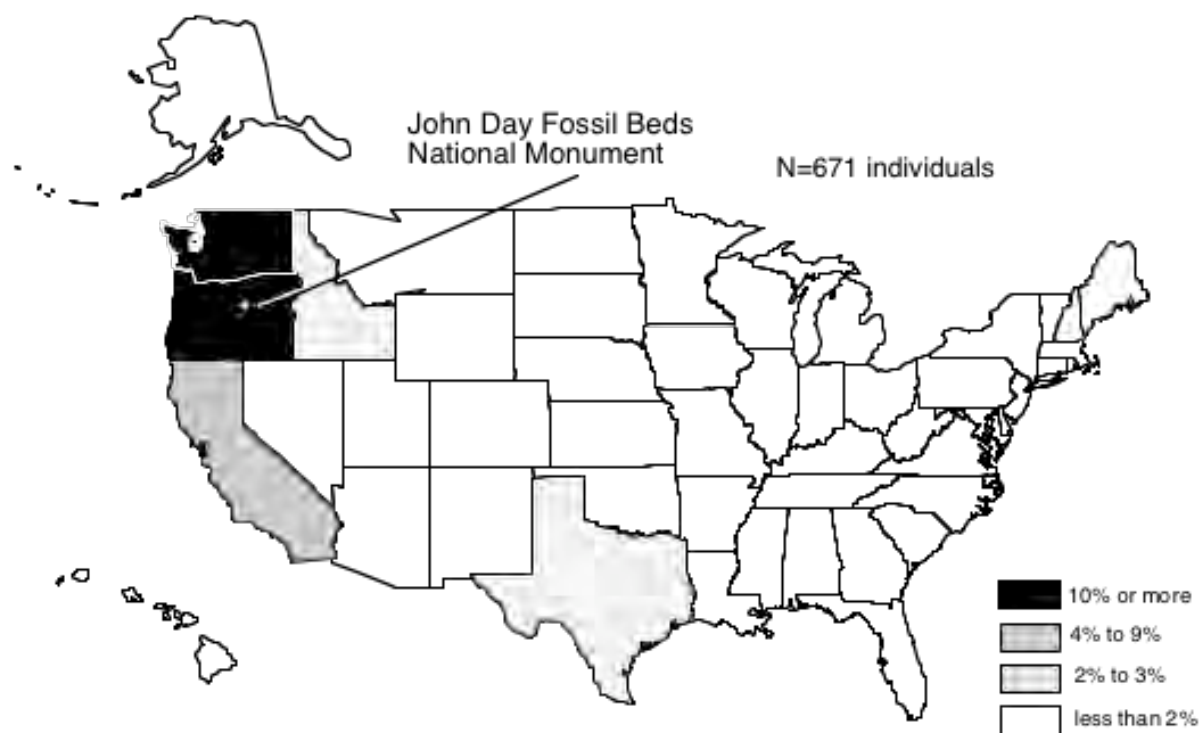


**Figure 9: Visitors who encounter access/service problems in park**

**Table 3: International visitors by country of residence**

percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Country	Number of individuals	Percent of international visitors N=40 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=711 individuals
England	7	18	1
Canada	6	15	1
Holland	6	15	1
Germany	5	13	1
Israel	4	10	1
Italy	3	8	1
Switzerland	3	8	1
Australia	2	5	<1
Denmark	2	5	<1
Japan	2	5	<1



**Map 1: Proportion of United States visitors by state of residence**

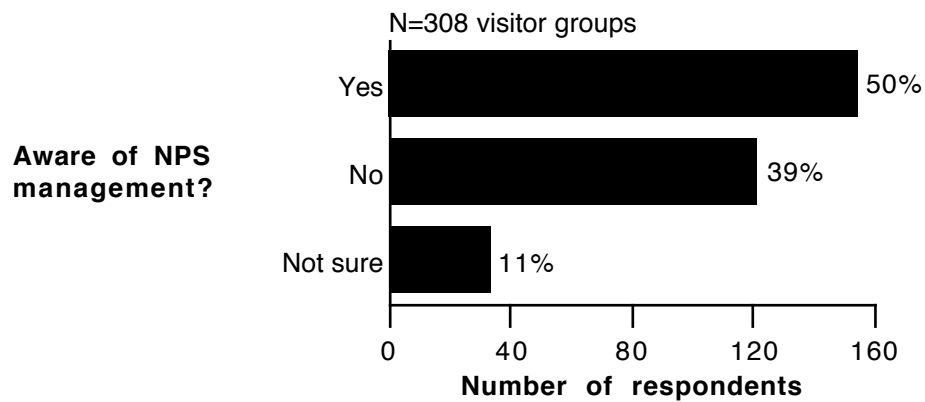
**Table 4: United States visitors by state of residence**

percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

State	Number of individuals	Percent of U.S. visitors N=671 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=711 individuals
Oregon	409	61	58
Washington	91	14	13
California	45	7	6
Idaho	22	3	3
Texas	11	2	2
Florida	10	1	1
Missouri	9	1	1
Massachusetts	7	1	1
Alaska	6	1	1
Nevada	6	1	1
Tennessee	6	1	1
Wisconsin	6	1	1
North Carolina	5	1	1
New York	5	1	1
Ohio	5	1	1
Illinois	4	1	1
11 other states	24	4	3

**Visitor awareness of park management**

Visitor groups were asked, “Prior to this visit, were you aware that John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is managed by the National Park Service?” As shown in Figure 10, one-half of visitor groups (50%) were aware that John Day Fossil Beds NM is managed by National Park Service. However, 39% were not aware and 11% were “not sure.”



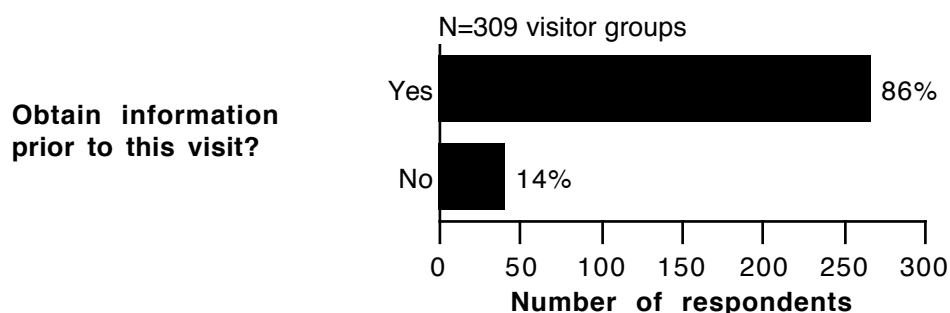
**Figure 10: Visitor awareness of park management**

### Sources of information

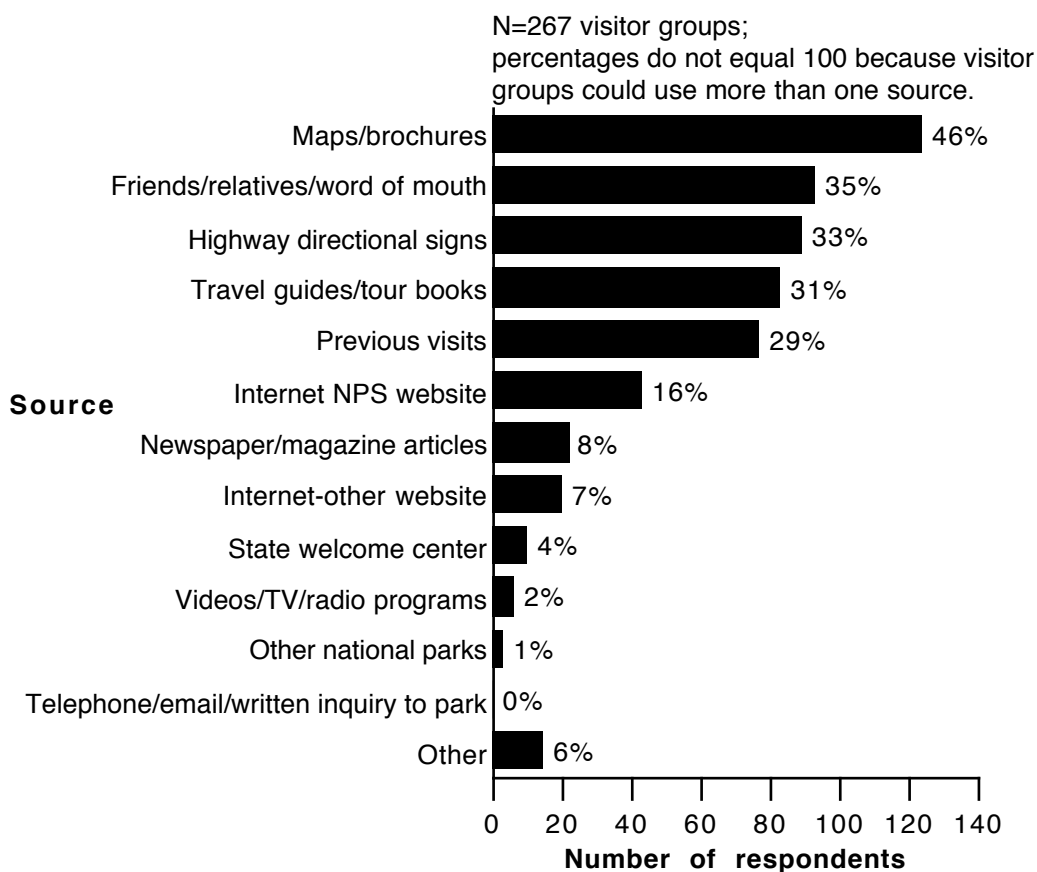
Most visitor groups (86%) obtained information about John Day Fossil Beds NM prior to their visit to the monument, while 14% did not receive any information (see Figure 11). The most common sources of information used by visitor groups included maps/brochures (46%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (35%), and highway directional signs (33%), as shown in Figure 12. “Other” sources of information included AAA travel book, National Park Passport Book, sporting magazine, school class, a restaurant in Spray, passing through area, and from a Greek person in Germany.

Visitor groups who obtained information about John Day Fossil Beds NM prior to this visit were then asked whether they received the needed information. Most visitor groups (91%) reported that they received information they needed (see Figure 13). However, 5% of visitor groups reported that they did not receive the information they needed and 4% were “not sure.”

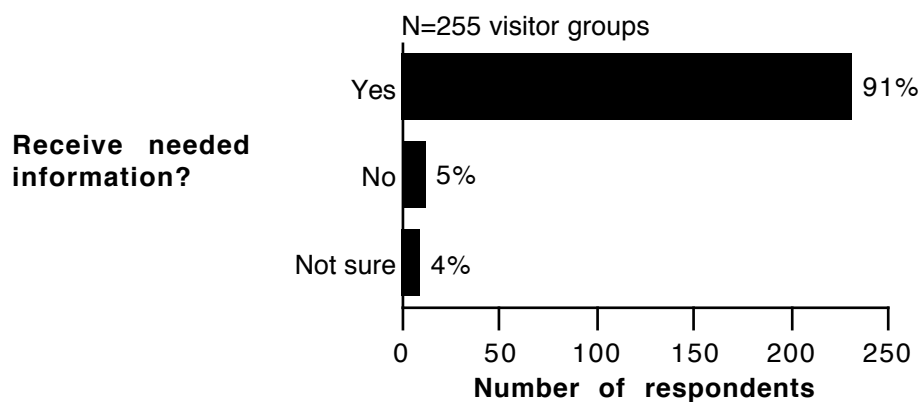
The information that visitor groups needed but were unable to obtain included visitor center operating hours, campsites in the area, entrance fee, places that visitors were allowed to dig for fossils, park sites (did not know that park has three sites), and comprehensive park map with mileage.



**Figure 11: Visitors who obtained information about John Day Fossil Beds NM prior to this visit**



**Figure 12: Sources of information used by visitor groups prior to this visit**

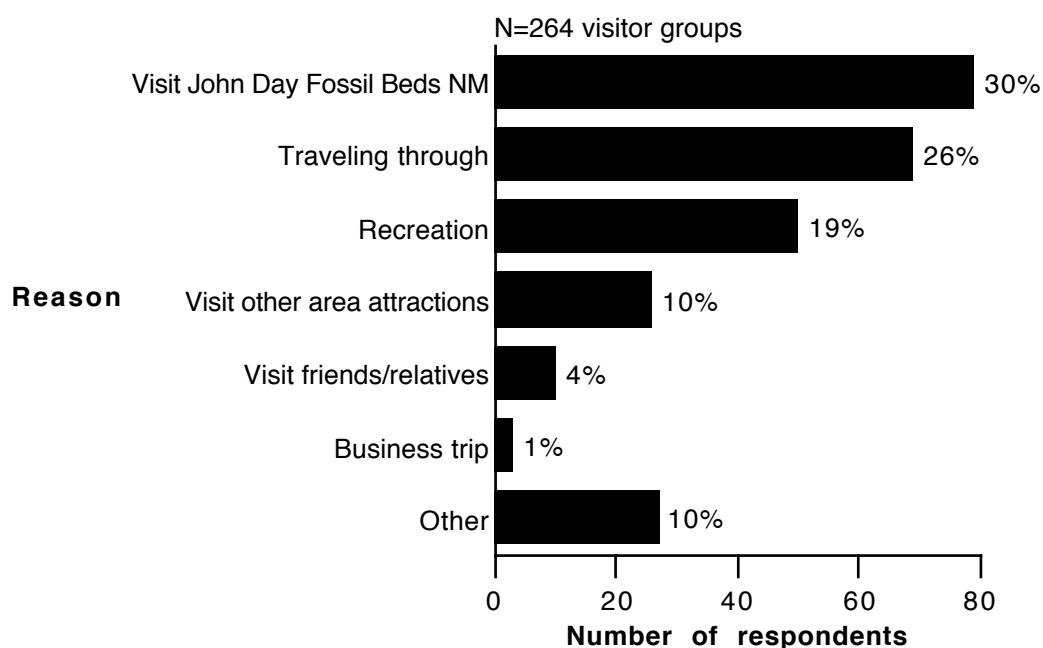


**Figure 13: Visitor groups who received needed information prior to this visit**

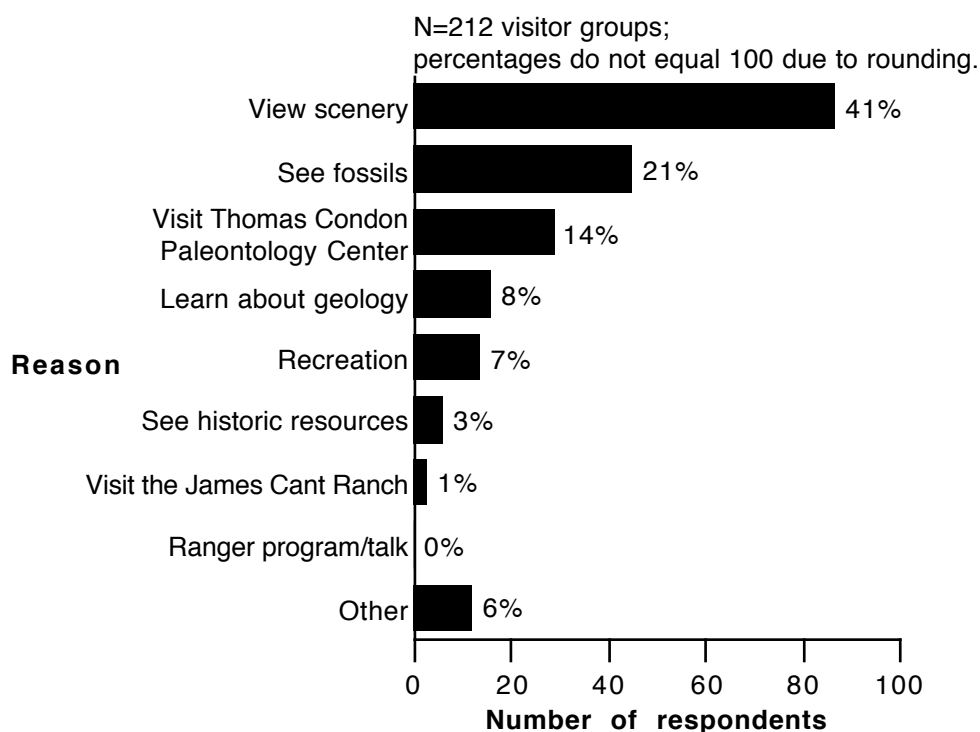
<p><b>Primary reason for visiting this part of eastern Oregon</b> <b>Primary reason for visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM</b></p>
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Thirty percent of visitor groups reported that visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM was their primary reason to visit this part of eastern Oregon (see Figure 14). Other primary reasons for visiting the area included traveling through (26%) and recreation (19%). One percent of visitor groups came to this part of eastern Oregon on a business trip. "Other" reasons for visiting this part of eastern Oregon included seeing the Painted Hills, thesis research, horseback riding, rafting trip, on the way to Yellowstone National Park, scenic driving through Oregon, family research, showing the area to relatives from out of state, visiting the area to plan for future trips, visiting Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, attending a religious convention, picking fruits at Kimberly, and seeing a new area.

Viewing scenery was the primary reason that 41% of visitor groups visited John Day Fossil Beds NM (see Figure 15). Twenty-one percent of visitor groups came to John Day Fossil Beds NM to see fossils and 14% visited Thomas Condon Paleontology Center. No visitor group reported that participating in a ranger program/talk was their primary reason for visiting John Day Fossils Bed NM. "Other" reasons for visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM included scouting for future visits, collecting fossils, rest stop, get a stamp in National Park Passport Book, attending OMSI Camp (Oregon Museum of Science and Industry – family paleontology weekend), passing through, looking for rattle snakes and photography.



**Figure 14: Primary reason for visiting this part of eastern Oregon**



**Figure 15: Primary reason for visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM**

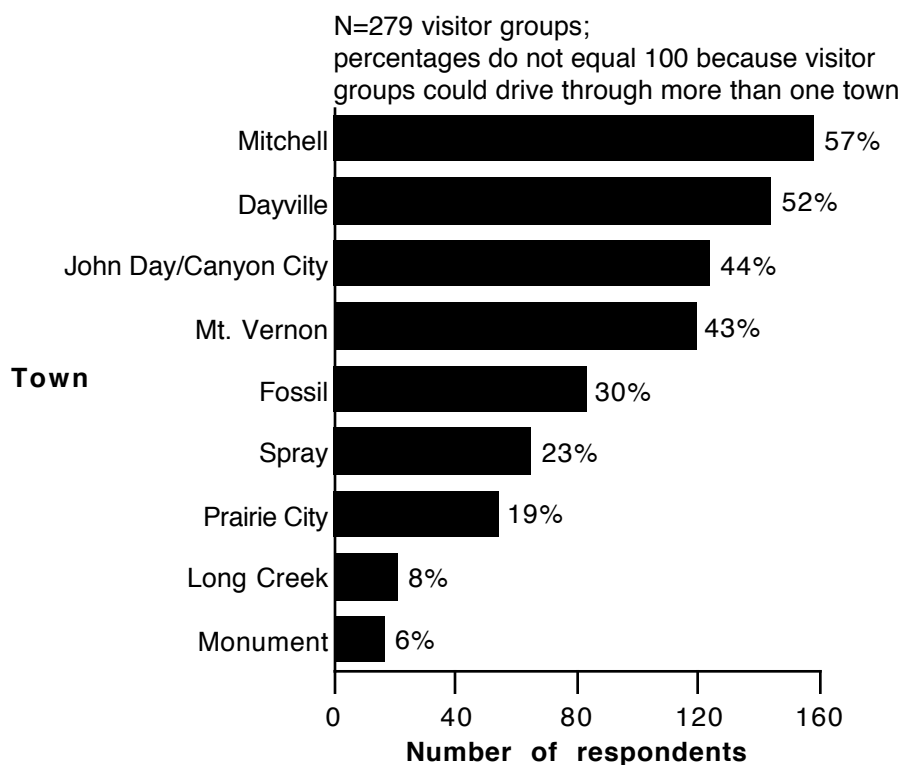


**Gateway communities: traveled through and services used  
Places where visitor groups started their trip and planned  
destinations after visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM**

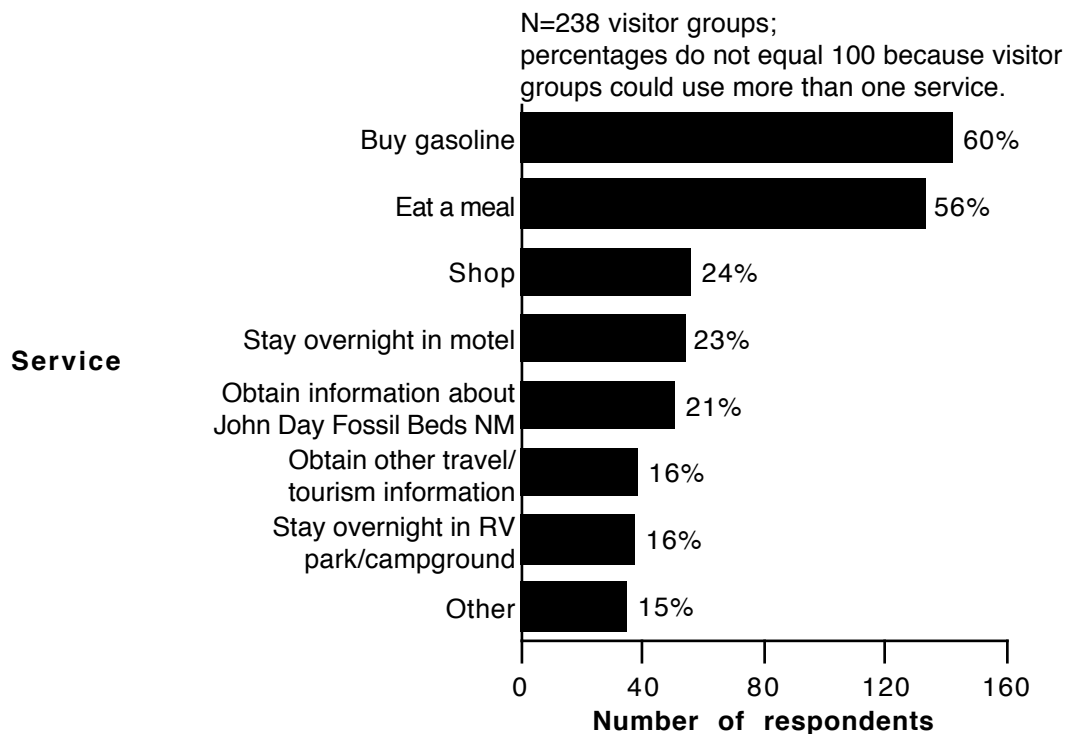
Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups drove through Mitchell to get to John Day Fossil Beds NM, as shown in Figure 16. Fifty-two percent of groups drove through Dayville, 44% drove through John Day/Canyon City, and 43% drove through Mt. Vernon.

Visitor groups were then asked what services they used in these “gateway” communities. As shown in Figure 17, the most used services in the gateway communities included buying gasoline (60%) and eating a meal (56%). The least used services were staying overnight in RV park/campground (16%) and obtaining other travel/tourism information (16%). “Other” services included grocery stores/snack shops, postal service, pay phone, coffee/drinks/refreshments, picking fruits at Kimberly, restrooms, and museums in the area. Visitor groups were also asked what services they would use if they were available in the gateway communities. Not enough visitor groups responded to provide reliable data (see Figure 18).

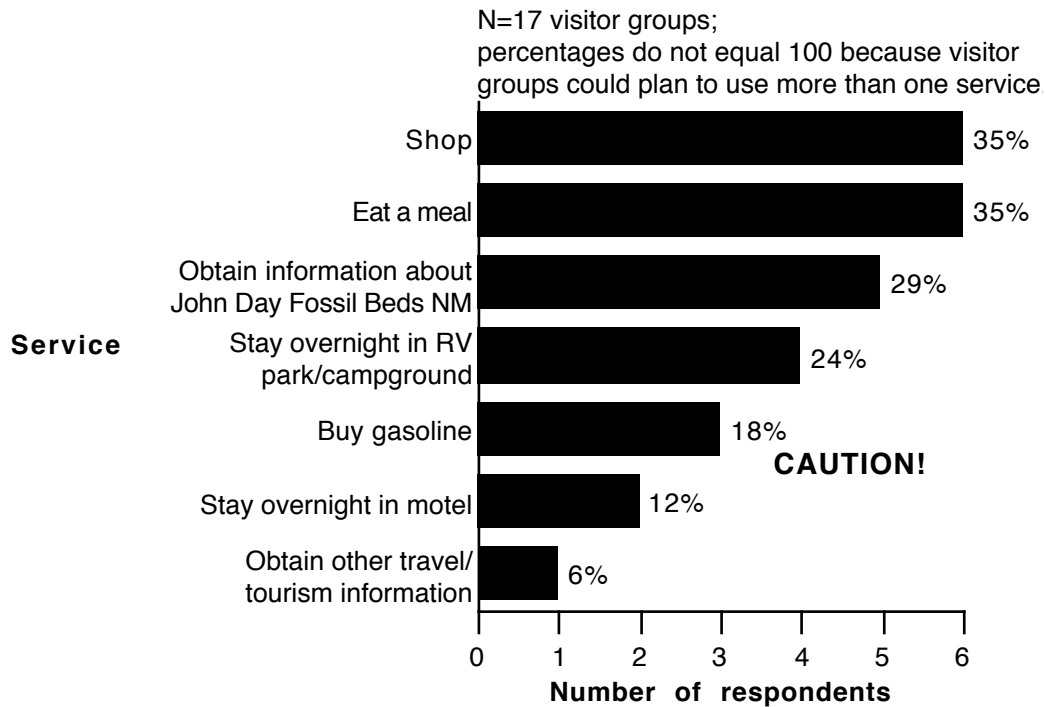
Table 5 lists comments from 56 visitor groups about the services that they used in gateway communities. Table 6 and 7 list the places where visitor groups started their trip on the day they arrived and destinations on the night after their visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM.



**Figure 16: Oregon towns visitor groups drove through to get to John Day Fossil Beds NM**



**Figure 17: Services used in gateway communities**



**Figure 18: Services visitor groups would have used if available**

**Table 5: Visitor comments about services they used in gateway communities**

N=63 comments;  
some visitor groups had more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>Accommodation services</b>	
Nice and clean RV park	6
Bed and Breakfast in Fossil was excellent, will recommend to others	2
Fish House Inn in Dayville was very good	2
Dreamers Lodge was very friendly and clean	1
Best Western motel was friendly and clean	1
Too few motels and too far away	1
Chose to stay in Redmond because of quality and variety	1
Need to have more information about availability of lodging in the area	1
Add a dry camp area	1

**Table 5: Visitor comments about services they used in gateway communities  
(continued)**

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>Food service</b>	
Good food	6
Too few options	3
Very friendly restaurant employees	3
Good food at Silver Spur Restaurant	2
Lack of choice for vegetarian	2
Surprised with quality of coffee	2
Average quality of food	2
Local residents were really friendly and helpful	1
A bakery in the area would be nice	1
<b>Gas</b>	
Good, OK	2
Expensive	1
Closed too early in the evening	1
Add a gas station in Dayville or Mitchell	1
<b>Shops</b>	
Shops closed too early	2
Very friendly and helpful people in shops	1
Outstanding general store in Dayville/John Day	1
<b>Telephone</b>	
Could not find a pay phone	1
Too few payphones	1
Bad connection	1
Local residents were very nice and helpful to find a pay phone	1
<b>Information services</b>	
Park should put more information packages at hotels/motels	1
Liked the fossil displays/information	1
<b>Other comments</b>	
Everything was fine	3
Park was nice and clean	2
Local people were very friendly	2
Had no information prior to visit about availability of services	1
More restrooms on Highway 26	1
We loved the town	1

**Table 6: Places visitor groups started their trips on the day they arrived at John Day Fossil Beds NM**

N=297 places

Town/city and state	Number of times mentioned
Bend, OR	30
John Day, OR	30
Prineville, OR	24
Portland, OR	15
Redmond, OR	15
Fossil, OR	13
Baker City, OR	12
Boise, ID	7
Madras, OR	6
Burns, OR	5
Prairie City, OR	5
French Glen, OR	4
Mitchell, OR	4
Mount Vernon, OR	4
Pendleton, OR	4
Salem, OR	4
Spray, OR	4
Walla Walla, WA	4
Corvallis, OR	3
Dayville, OR	3
Maupin, OR	3
Ochoco National Forest, OR	3
Ontario, OR	3
Sisters, OR	3
Condon, OR	2
Crater Lake, OR	2
Culver, OR	2
Eugene, OR	2
Halfway, OR	2
Klamath Falls, OR	2
La Grande, OR	2
La Pine, OR	2
Long Creek, OR	2
Metolius, OR	2
Nampa, ID	2
Richland, WA	2
Shaniko, OR	2
Spokane, WA	2
Sun River, OR	2

**Table 6: Places visitor groups started their trips on the day they arrived at John Day Fossil Beds NM****(continued)**

Town/city and state	Number of times mentioned
Sweet Home, OR	2
Tygh Valley, OR	2
Unity, OR	2
Vale, OR	2
Anson Wright State Park, OR	1
Arlington, OR	1
Baytown, TX	1
Black Butte Ranch, OR	1
Boardman, OR	1
Brownsville, OR	1
Bryan, TX	1
Canyon City, OR	1
Chiloquin, OR	1
Clarkston, WA	1
Cougar, WA	1
Creswell, OR	1
Crooked River Ranch, OR	1
Emmett, ID	1
Gold Beach, OR	1
Granite, OR	1
Gresham, OR	1
Hells Canyon, OR	1
Hermiston, OR	1
Hillsboro, OR	1
Hood River, OR	1
Huntington, OR	1
Imnaha, OR	1
Junction, OR	1
Kimberly, OR	1
Lebanon, OR	1
Longview, WA	1
Medford, OR	1
Meridian, ID	1
Monmouth, OR	1
Monument, OR	1
Mount Angel, OR	1
Myrtle Point, OR	1
Oakridge, OR	1
Olympia, WA	1

**Table 6: Places visitor groups started their trips on the day they arrived at John Day Fossil Beds NM (continued)**

Town/city and state	Number of times mentioned
Oregon City, OR	1
Oxbow, OR	1
Preston, WA	1
Ruckee, CA	1
Saratoga, CA	1
Scio, OR	1
Seneco, OR	1
Shawiles, OR	1
Shelton Wayside Campground, OR	1
Springfield, OR	1
Sutton Mountain, OR	1
Terrebonne, OR	1
Tigard, OR	1
Umpqua, OR	1
Wilder, OR	1
Yakima, WA	1

**Table 7: Places visitor groups planned to stay on the night after visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM**

N= 289 places

Town/city and state	Number of times mentioned
Did not have a planned destination	6
John Day, OR	36
Bend, OR	21
Prineville, OR	18
Baker City, OR	17
Portland, OR	16
Redmond, OR	16
Fossil, OR	8
Burns, OR	7
Mount Vernon, OR	7
Ochoco National Forest, OR	7
Boise, ID	6
Crater Lake, OR	5
Dayville, OR	5
Eugene, OR	5
Mitchell, OR	5

**Table 7: Places visitor groups planned to stay on the night after visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM (continued)**

Town/city and state	Number of times mentioned
Beaverton, OR	4
Walla Walla, WA	4
Kimberly, OR	3
La Pine, OR	3
Madras, OR	3
Pendleton, OR	3
Sisters, OR	3
Sumpter, OR	3
Clyde Holiday State Park, OR	2
Corvallis, OR	2
Goldendale, WA	2
Grass Valley, OR	2
Hood River, OR	2
Medford, OR	2
Roseburg, OR	2
Salem, OR	2
Spray, OR	2
Springfield, OR	2
Sunriver, OR	2
Terrebonne, OR	2
The Dalles, OR	2
Anson Wright State Park, OR	1
Austin, OR	1
Biggs, OR	1
Blue Mountains, OR	1
Boardman, OR	1
Canyon City, OR	1
Cascade Mountains, OR	1
Crane Hot Springs, OR	1
Crescent, OR	1
Crooked River Ranch, OR	1
Culver, OR	1
Dalles, OR	1
Drain, OR	1
Enterprise, OR	1
Eureka, CA	1
French Glen, OR	1
Glacier, WA	1
Gladstone, OR	1



**Table 7: Places visitor groups planned to stay on the night after visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM (continued)**

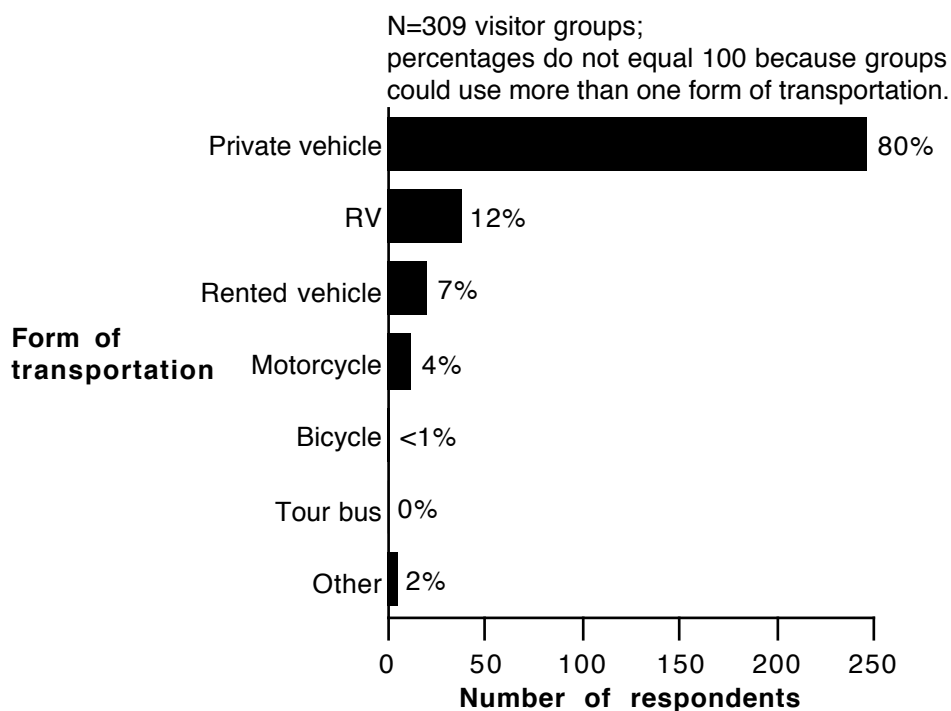
Town/city and state	Number of times mentioned
Halfway, OR	1
Hepner, OR	1
Hermiston, OR	1
Hillsboro, OR	1
Joseph, OR	1
La Grande, OR	1
Lincoln City, OR	1
Long Creek, OR	1
Lyle, WA	1
Malheur National Forest, OR	1
Marcola, OR	1
Mary Hill State Park, WA	1
Maupin, OR	1
Metolius, OR	1
Monument, OR	1
Moses Lake, WA	1
Mount Angel, OR	1
Newport, OR	1
Oakridge, OR	1
Olympia, WA	1
Ontario, OR	1
Paulina, OR	1
Philomath, OR	1
Prairie City, OR	1
Pullman, WA	1
Sanko, OR	1
Seneca, OR	1
Spokane, WA	1
Strawberry Mountains, OR	1
Umatilla, WA	1
Vancouver, WA	1
Washougal, WA	1
Wildcat Campground, OR	1
Woodinville, WA	1

### Forms of transportation Adequacy of directional road signs

**Forms of transportation:** Visitor groups were asked to report forms of transportation that they used to arrive at John Day Fossil Beds NM on this trip. The most common form of transportation was a private vehicle (80%), followed by RV (12%), as shown in Figure 19. No visitor groups used tour bus and less than 1% used bicycle.

“Other” form of transportation included pickup with horse trailer.

**Adequacy of directional road signs:** Figures 20, 21, and 22 show visitor groups opinion about adequacy of directional road signs on interstates, state highways, and in communities. Most visitor groups reported that signs on state highways (91%), signs in communities (63%), and signs on interstates (51%) were adequate to direct them to John Day Fossil Beds NM. However, some visitor groups reported that signs on interstate (7%), signs in communities (6%), and signs on state highways (4%) were not adequate.



**Figure 19: Forms of transportation**

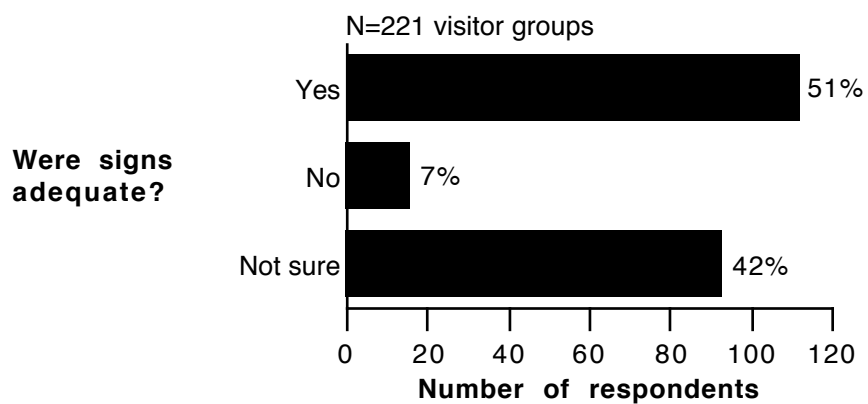


Figure 20: Adequacy of signs on interstates

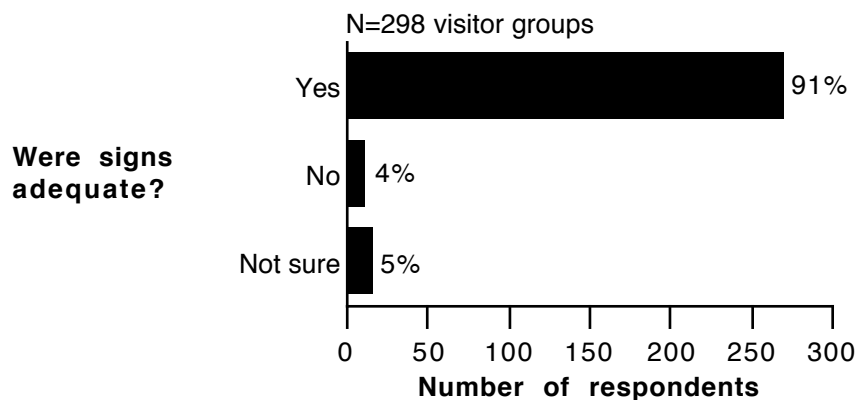


Figure 21: Adequacy of signs on state highways

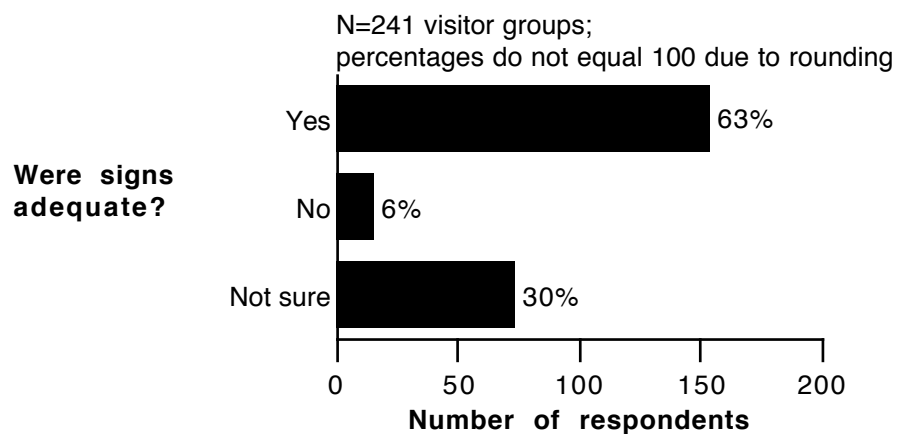
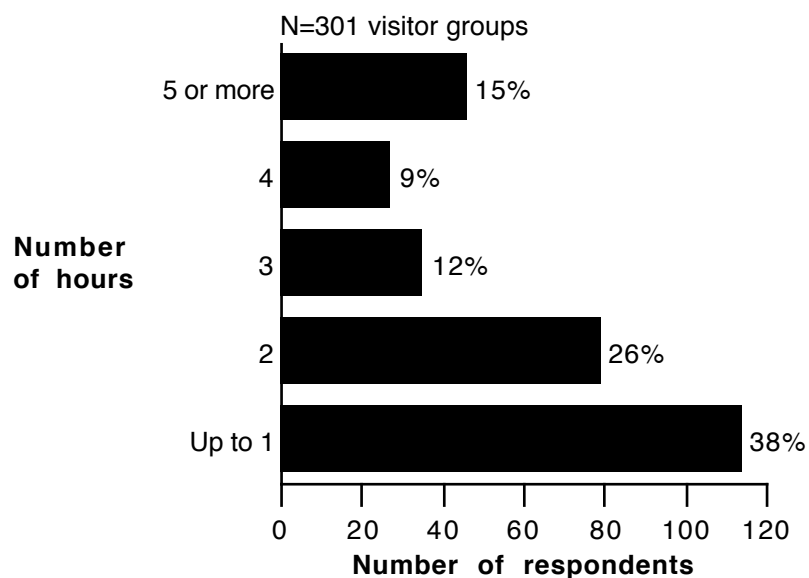


Figure 22: Adequacy of signs in communities

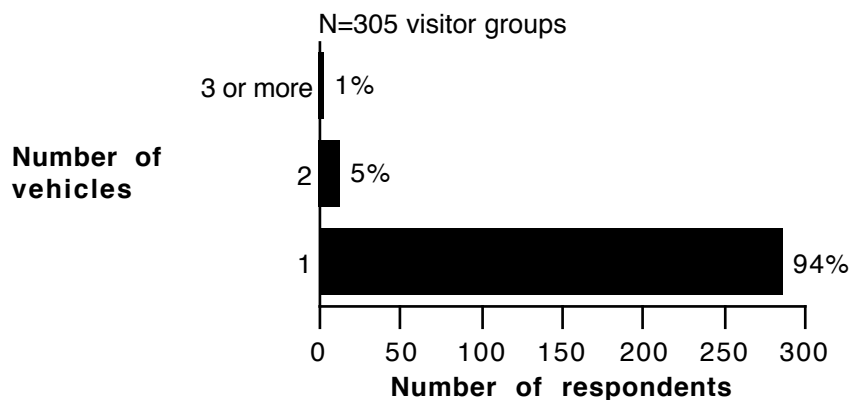
**Length of visit  
Number of vehicles**

**Length of visit:** On the day they received the questionnaire, 38% of visitor groups spent one hour visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM and 26% spent two hours, as shown in Figure 23.

**Number of vehicles used:** On this visit, most visitor groups (94%) arrived at John Day Fossil Beds NM in one vehicle (see Figure 24). Five percent of visitor groups used two vehicles and 1% of visitor groups used three or more vehicles.



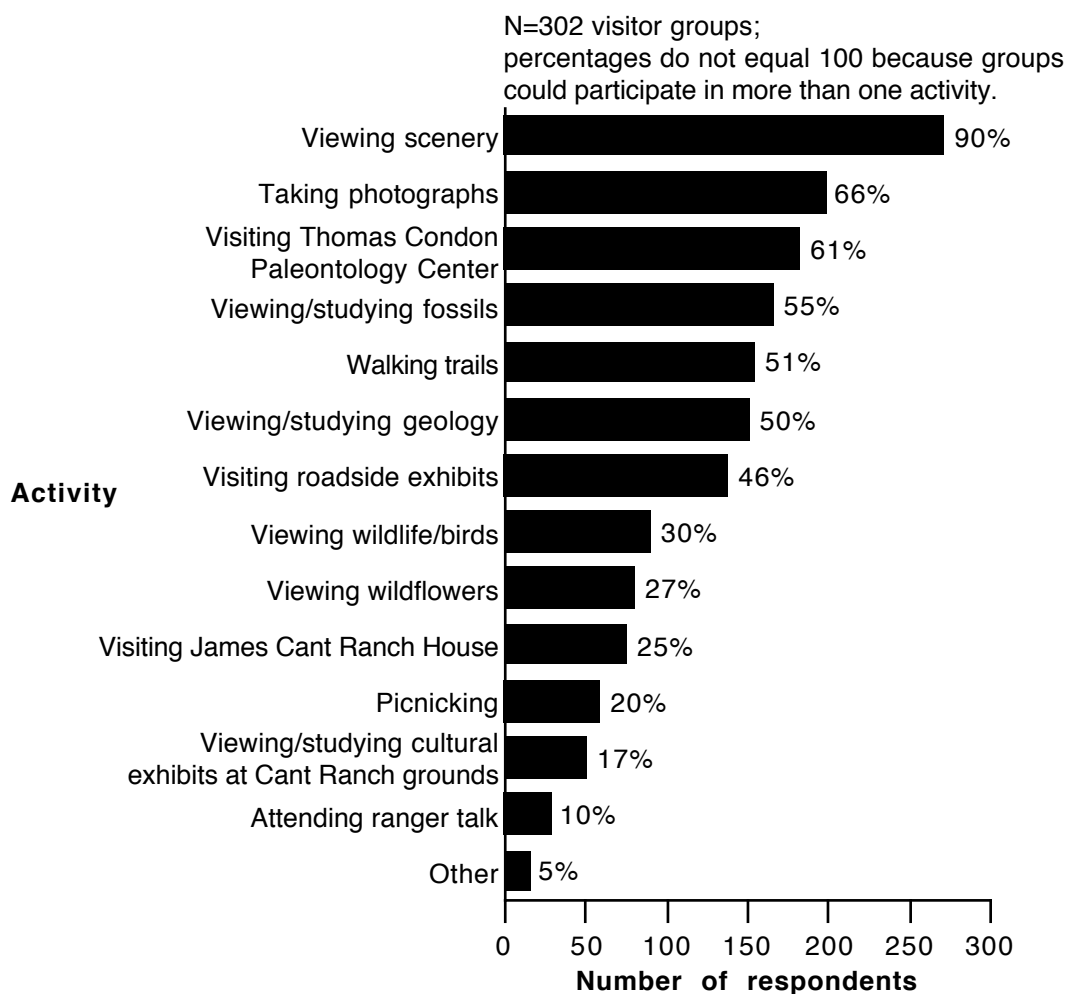
**Figure 23: Number of hours spent visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM on the day receiving questionnaire**



**Figure 24: Number of vehicles used by visitor groups to arrive at monument**

### Activities

On this visit to John Day Fossils Beds NM, the most common activities that visitor groups participated in included viewing scenery (90%), taking photographs (66%), and visiting Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (61%), as shown in Figure 25. Attending ranger talk (10%) was the least common activity. "Other" activities included scenic driving, watching film/video at visitor center, fishing, digging for fossils in Fossil, feeling special, meditating, and picking up brochures for future visit.

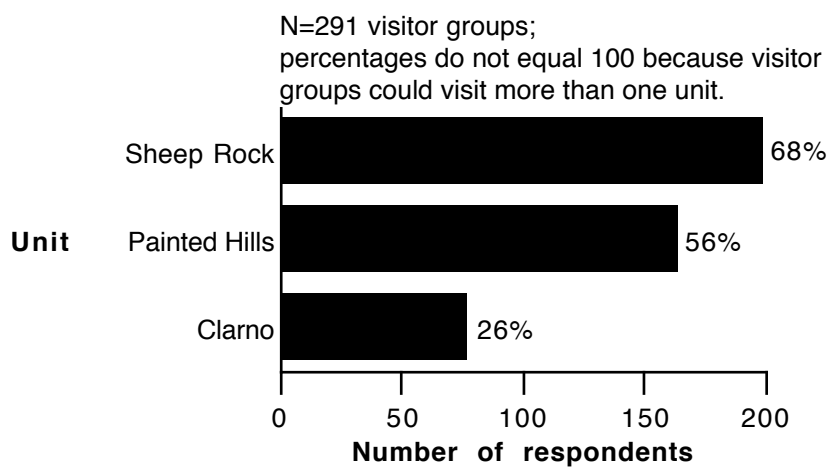


**Figure 25: Visitor activities**

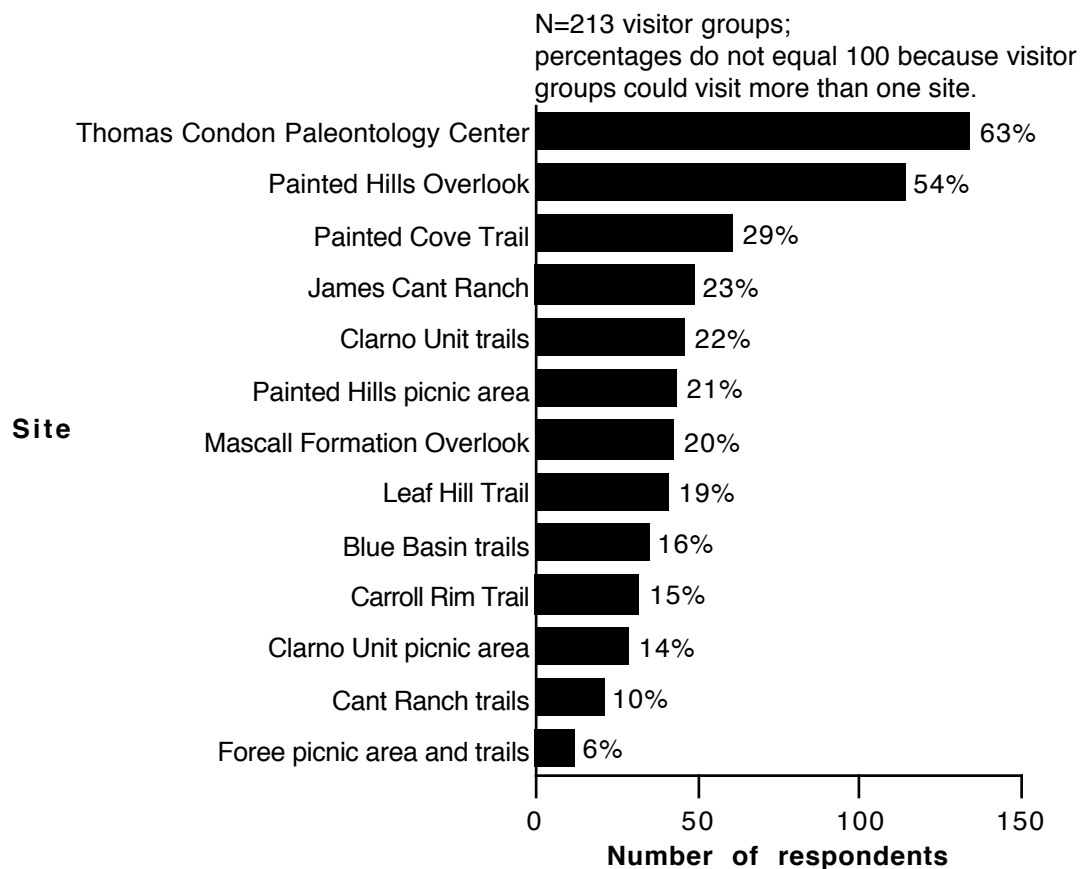
**Units and sites visited**  
**Sites visited first**

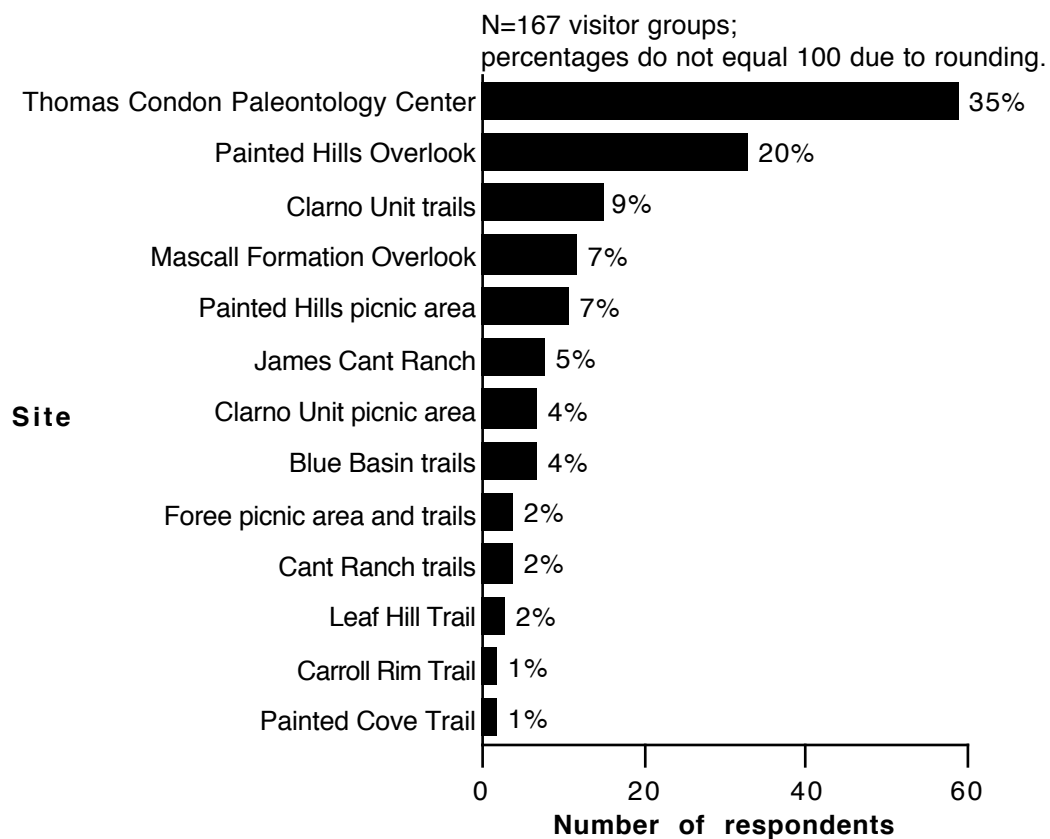
**Units and sites visited:** On this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM, 68% of visitor groups visited Sheep Rock Unit, 56% visited Painted Hills Unit, and 26% visited Clarno Unit, as shown in Figure 26. Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (63%), Painted Hills Overlook (54%), and Painted Cove Trail (29%) were the most visited sites by visitor groups (see Figure 27).

**Sites visited first:** Thirty-five percent of visitor groups reported Thomas Condon Paleontology Center was the site they visited first on this visit (see Figure 28). Another 20% of visitor groups visited Painted Hills Overlook and 9% visited Clarno Unit trails first on this visit.



**Figure 26: Units visited**

**Figure 27: Sites visited**



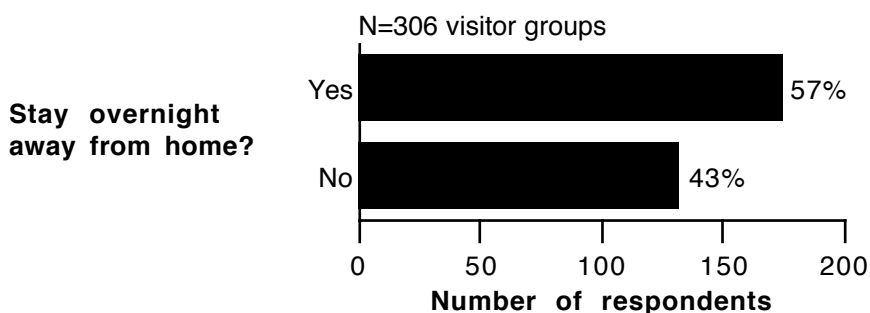
**Figure 28: Sites visited first**



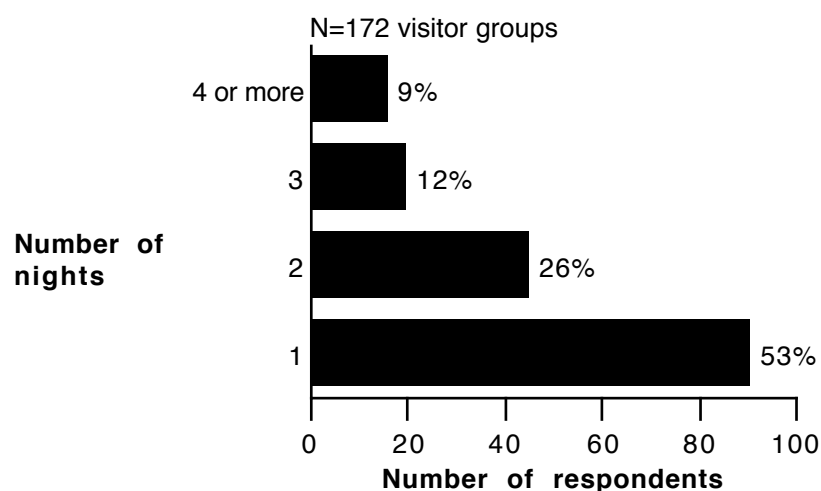
### Overnight accommodations

Visitor groups were asked a series of questions concerning their overnight accommodations in John Day Fossil Beds NM area (within 50 miles of any unit). First, visitor groups were asked if they stayed overnight away from home in the area. Over one-half (57%) of visitor groups stayed overnight away from home in the John Day Fossil Beds NM area, while 43% did not stay overnight (see Figure 29). Of those who stayed overnight away from home in the area, 53% stayed one night, 26% stayed two nights, and 12% stayed three nights (see Figure 30).

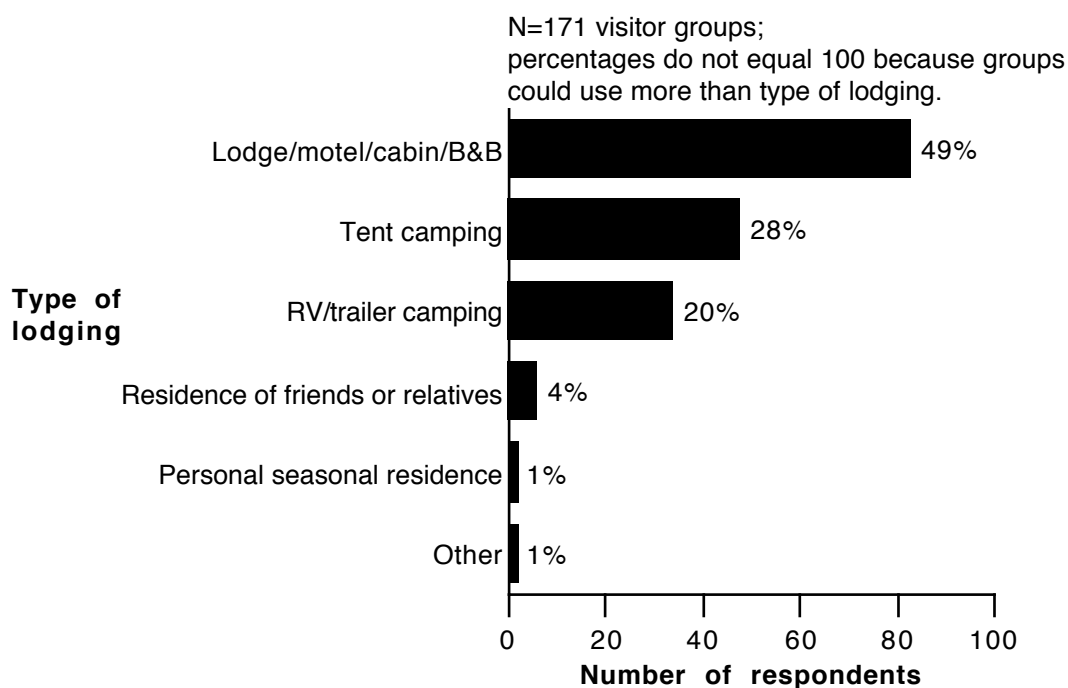
The most common type of lodging that visitor groups used was a lodge, hotel, motel, cabin, rented condo, or Bed and Breakfast (49%), followed by tent camping (28%), and RV/trailer camping (20%), as shown in Figure 31. "Other" types of lodging included a nearby ranch and sleeping in a van.



**Figure 29: Visitor groups who stayed overnight away from home in the John Day Fossil Beds NM area (within 50 miles of any unit)**



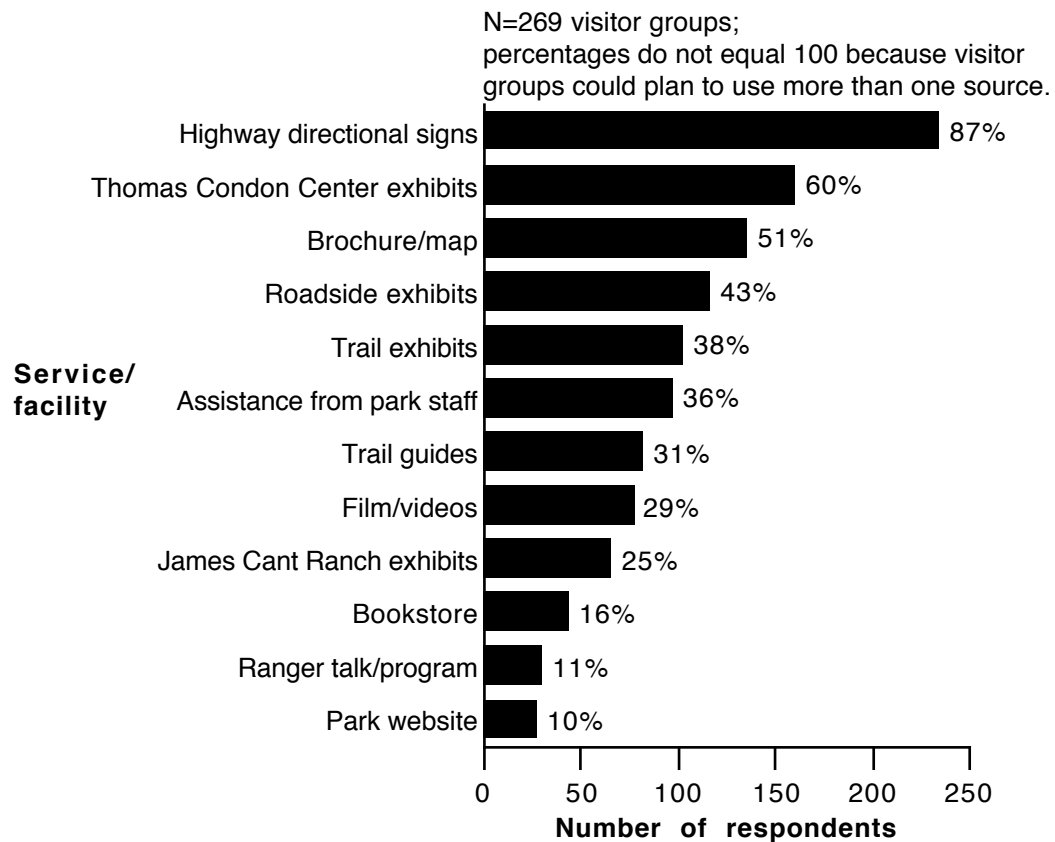
**Figure 30: Number of nights stayed overnight in the area  
(within 50 miles of any unit)**



**Figure 31: Type of lodging visitor groups used in the area  
(within 50 miles of any unit)**

**Visitor services and facilities: use**

Visitors were asked to note the visitor services and facilities they used during this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM. The most used services and facilities included the highway directional signs (87%), Thomas Condon Center exhibits (60%), and brochure/map (51%), as shown in Figure 32. The least used services were ranger talk/program (11%) and park website (10%).



**Figure 32: Visitor services and facilities used**

**Visitor services and facilities: importance and quality**

Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the visitor services and facilities they used. The following five-point scales were used in the questionnaire.

**IMPORTANCE**

5=Extremely important  
4=Very important  
3=Moderately important  
2=Somewhat important  
1=Not important

**QUALITY**

5=Very good  
4=Good  
3=Average  
2=Poor  
1=Very poor

The average importance and quality ratings for each visitor service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and facility. Figures 33 and 34 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the park services and facilities. All services and facilities were rated above average in importance and quality. Note: ranger talk/program and park website were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable data.

Figures 35-46 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the services/facilities. The services/facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “very important” and “extremely important” ratings included Thomas Condon Center exhibits (87%, N=152), trail exhibits (82%, N=100), and assistance from park staff (80%, N=93), as shown in Figure 47. The facility receiving the highest proportion of “not important” rating was the bookstore (10%).

Figures 48-59 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the services/facilities. The services/facilities receiving the highest proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings included assistance from park staff (94%, N=87), Thomas Condon Center exhibits (92%, N=140), and trail exhibits (85%, N= 92), as shown in Figure 60. The service receiving the highest “very poor” rating by visitor groups was trail guides (4%).

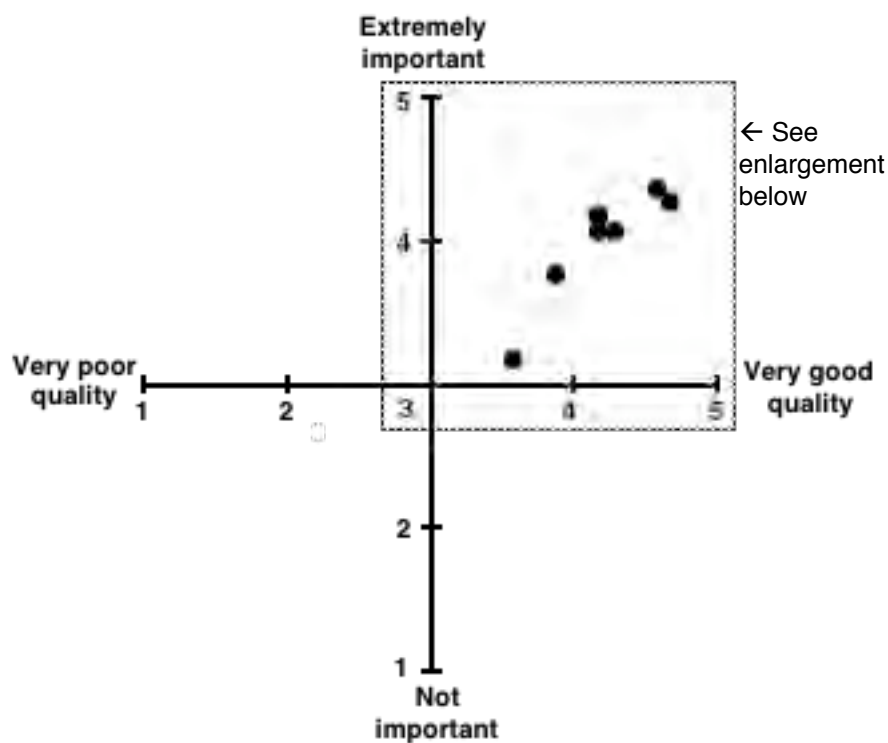


Figure 33: Average importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities

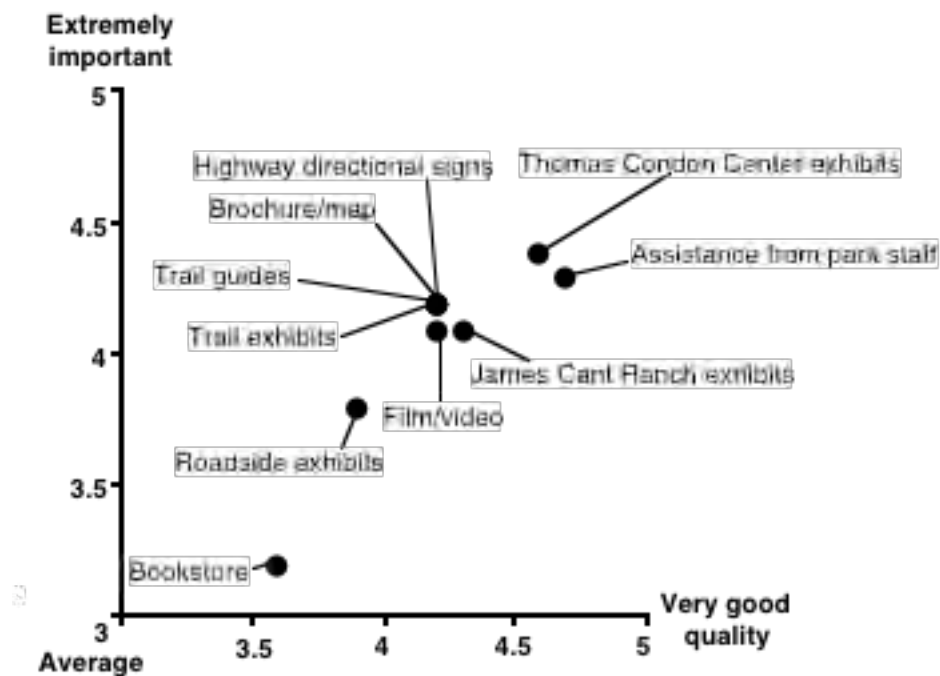
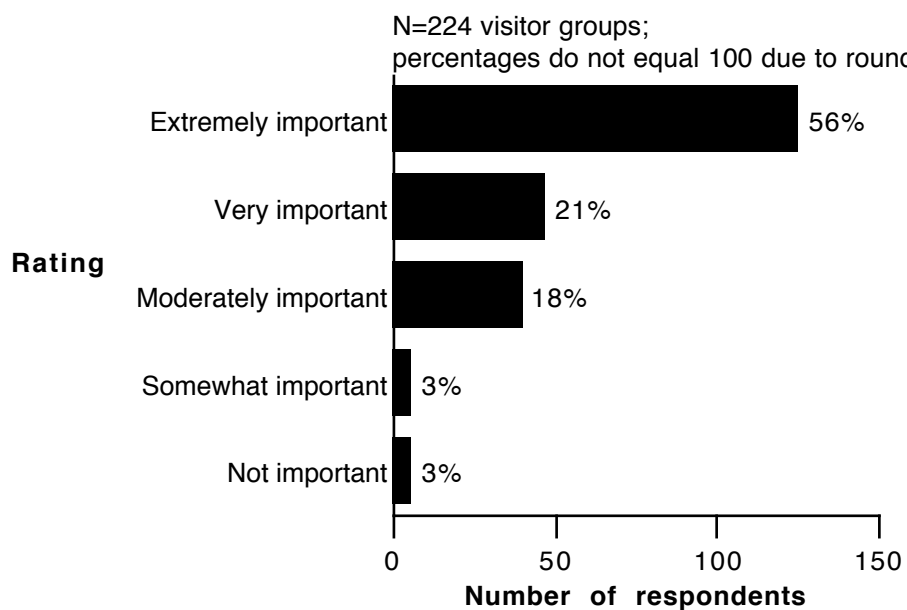
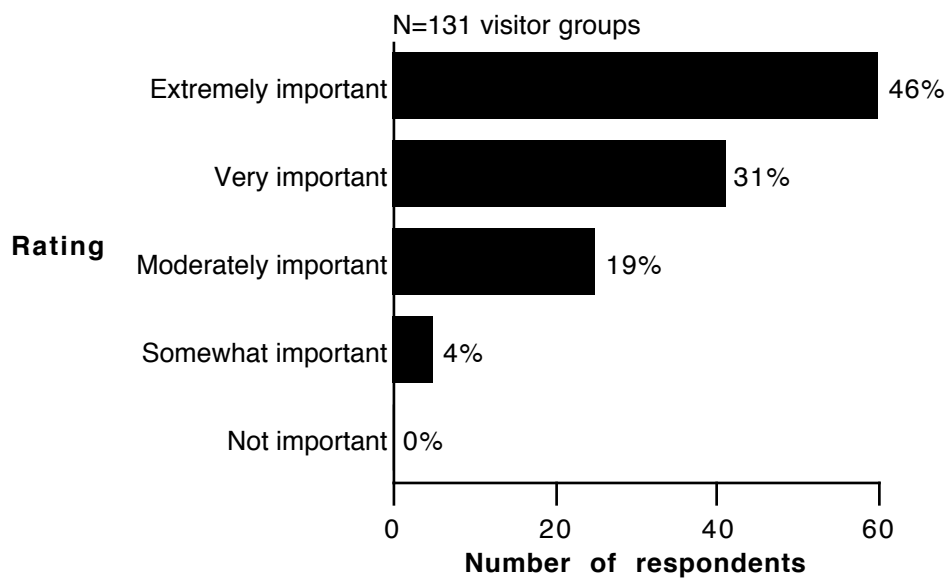


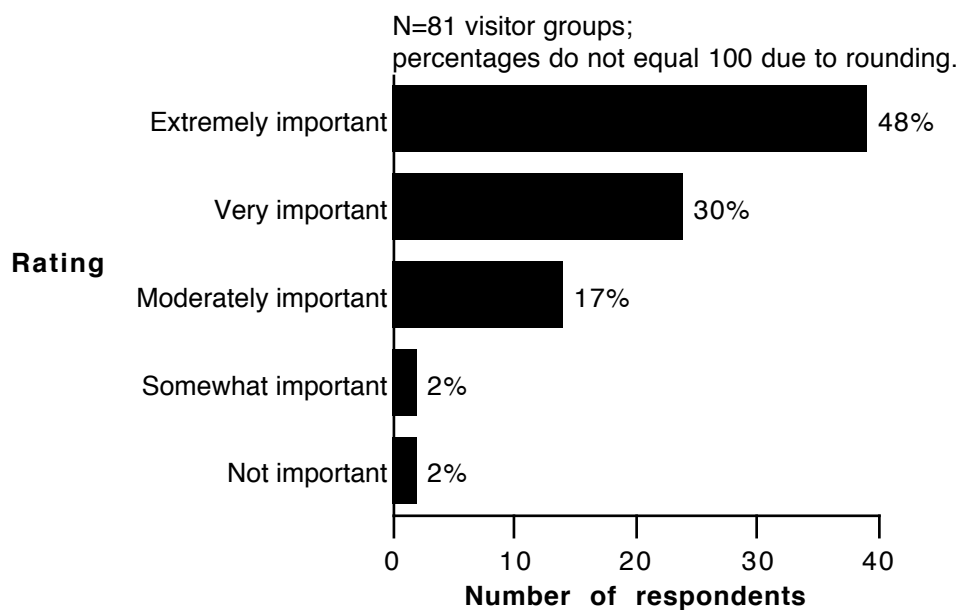
Figure 34: Detail of Figure 33



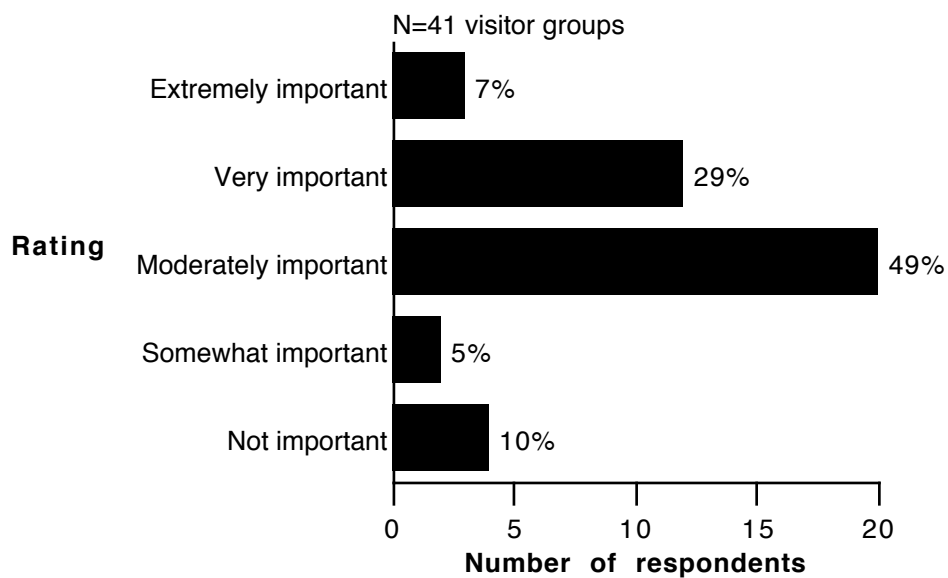
**Figure 35: Importance of highway directional signs**



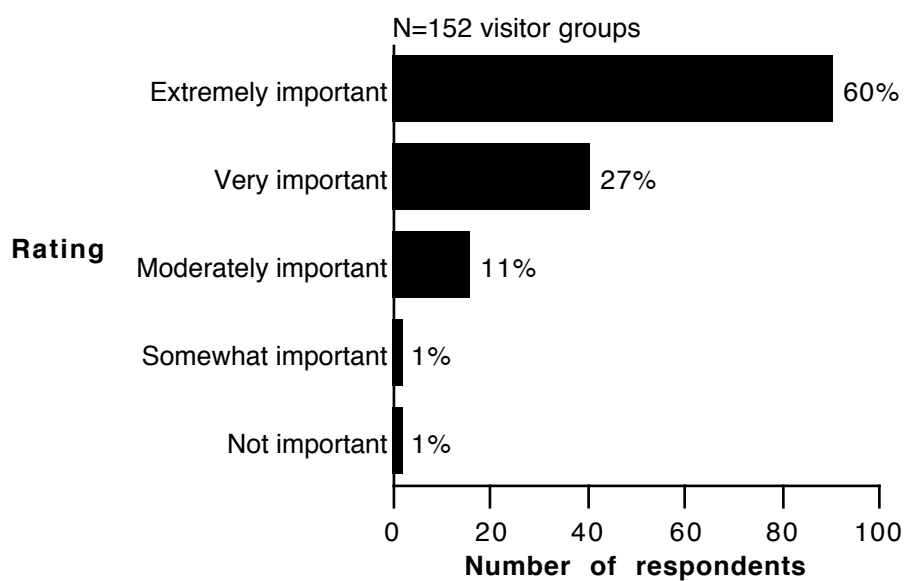
**Figure 36: Importance of brochure/map**



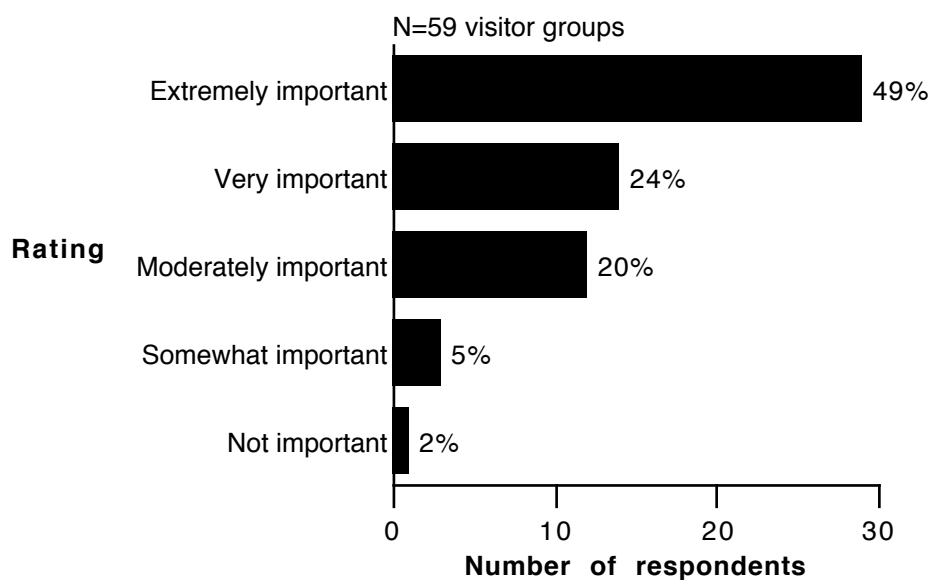
**Figure 37: Importance of trail guides**



**Figure 38: Importance of bookstore**

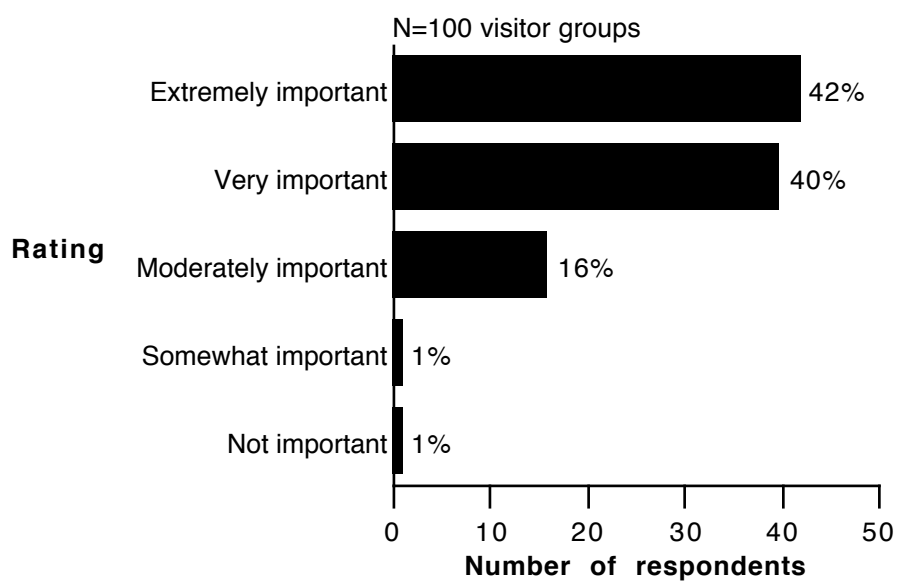


**Figure 39: Importance of Thomas Condon Center exhibits**

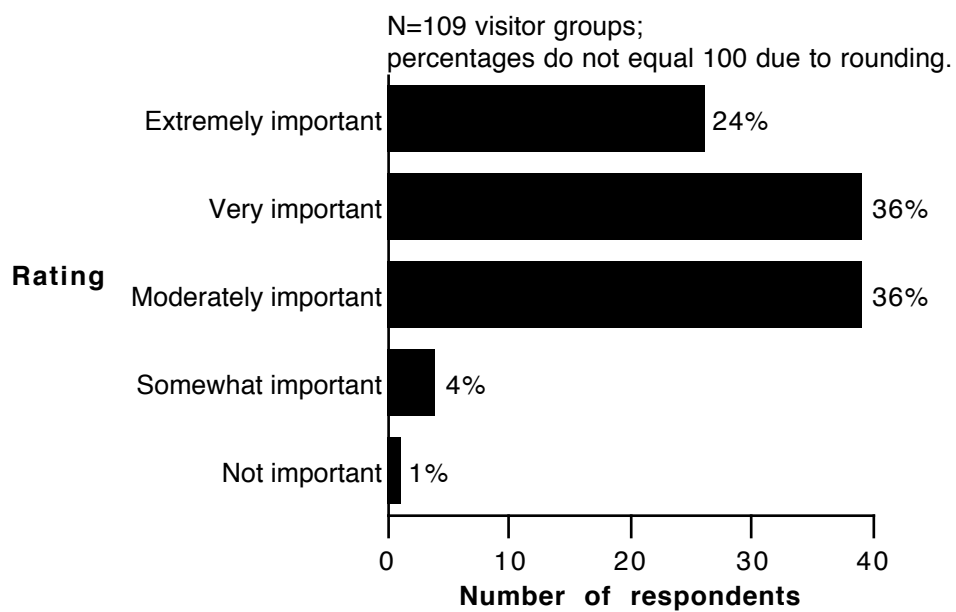


**Figure 40: Importance of James Cant Ranch exhibits**





**Figure 41: Importance of trail exhibits**



**Figure 42: Importance of roadside exhibits**

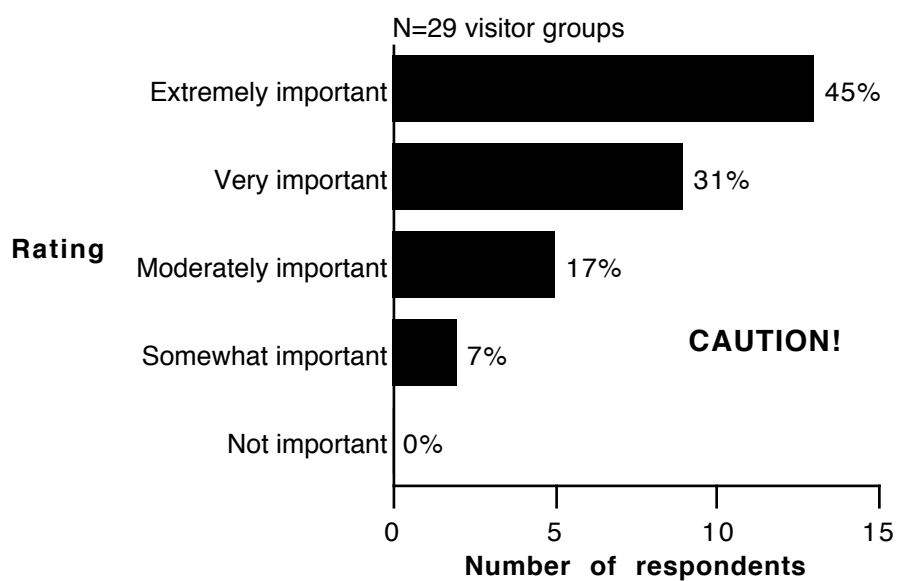


Figure 43: Importance of ranger talk/program

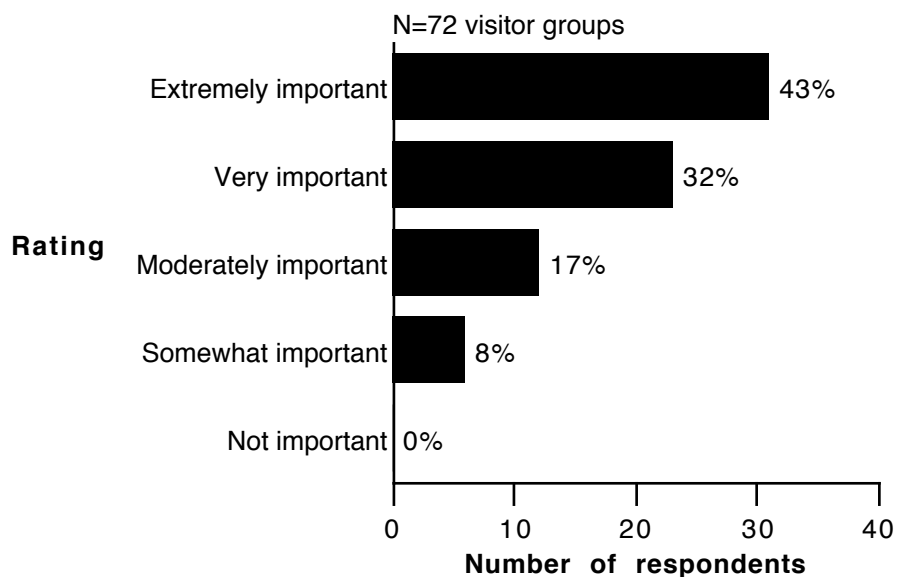
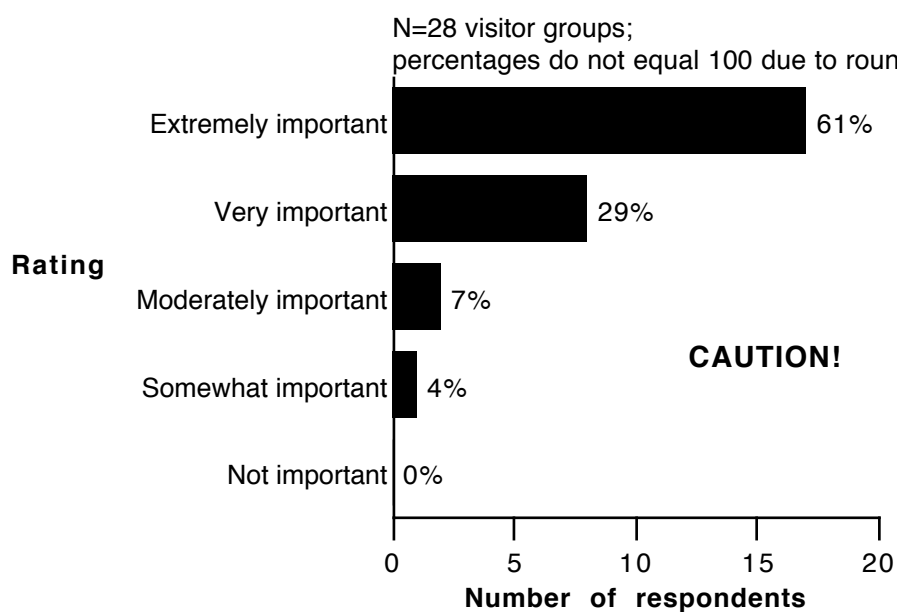
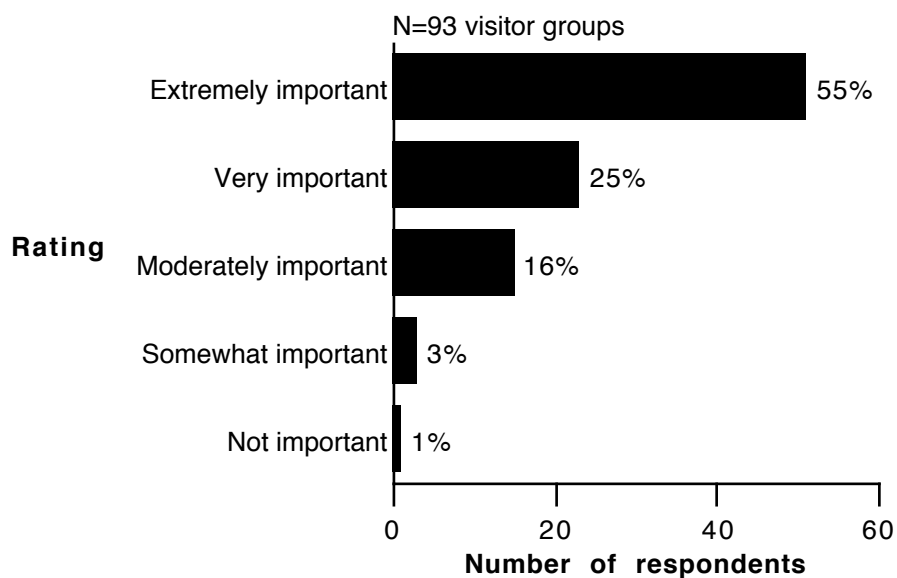


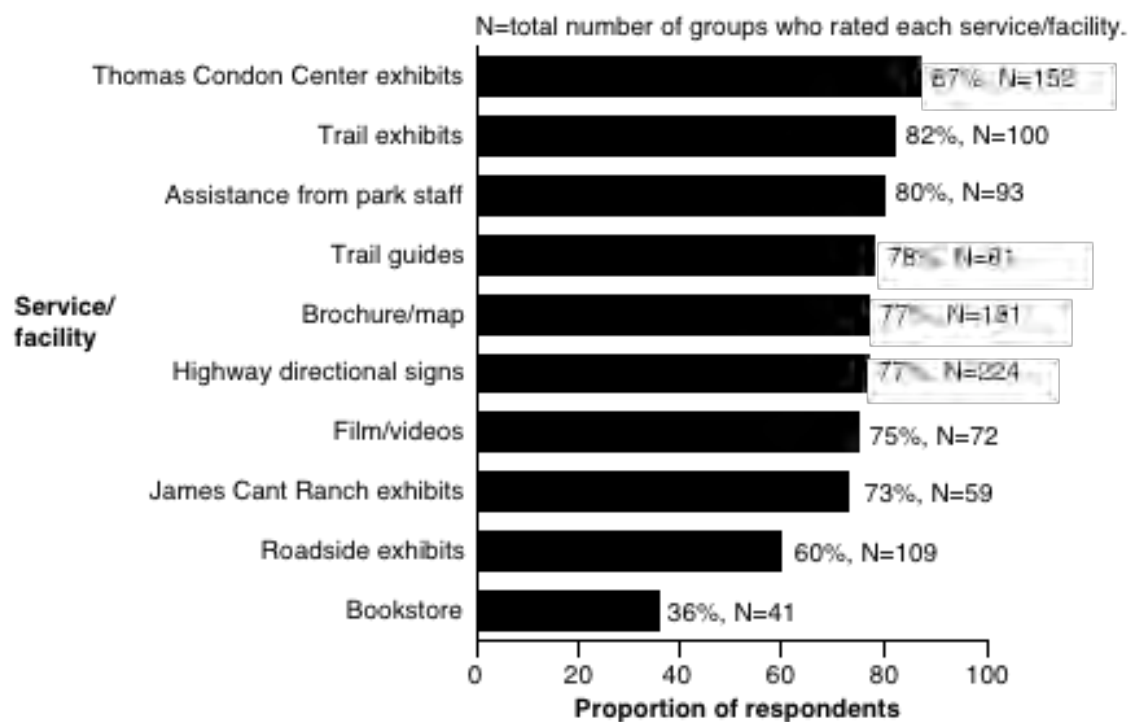
Figure 44: Importance of film/videos



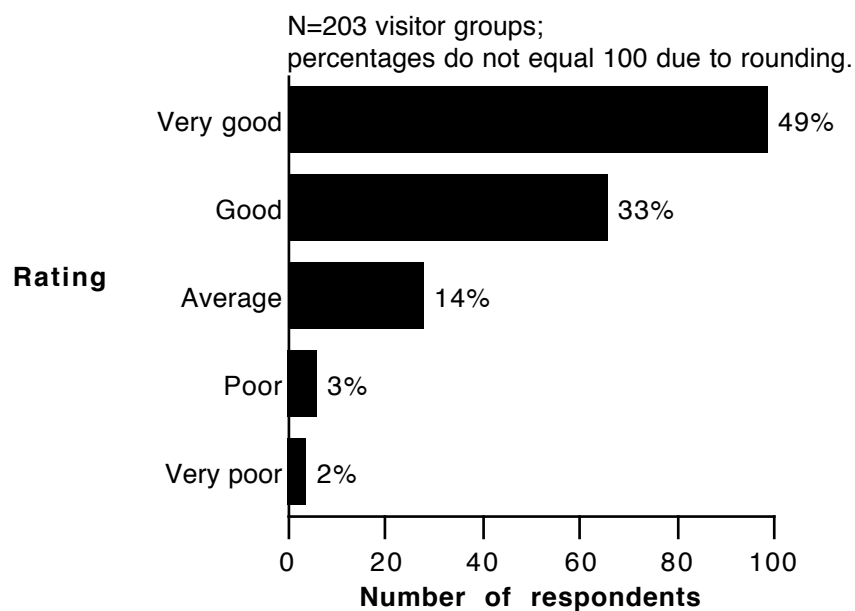
**Figure 45: Importance of park website**



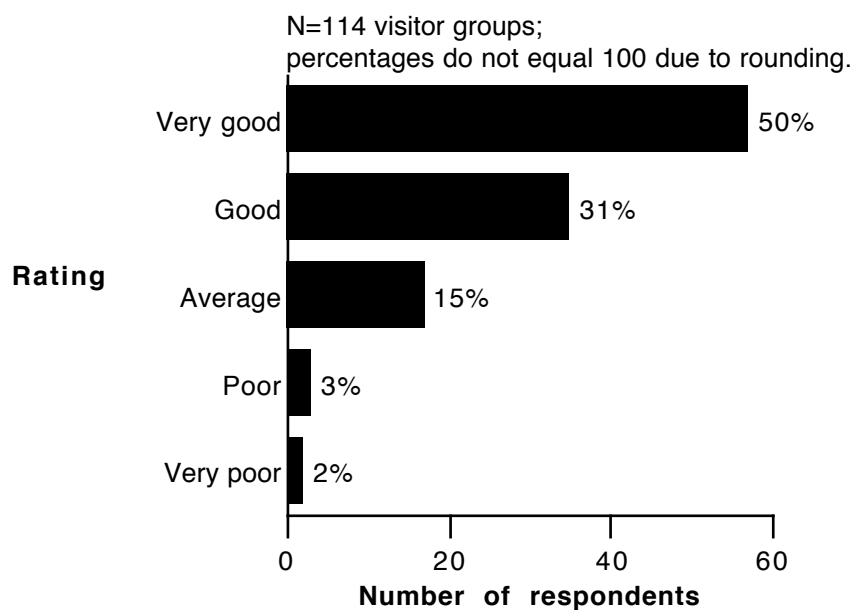
**Figure 46: Importance assistance from park staff**



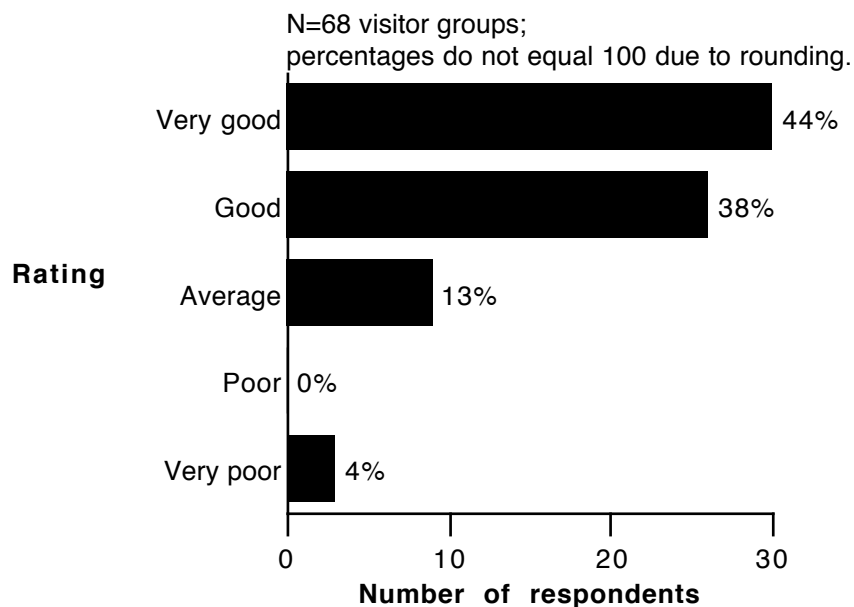
**Figure 47: Combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings for visitor services and facilities**



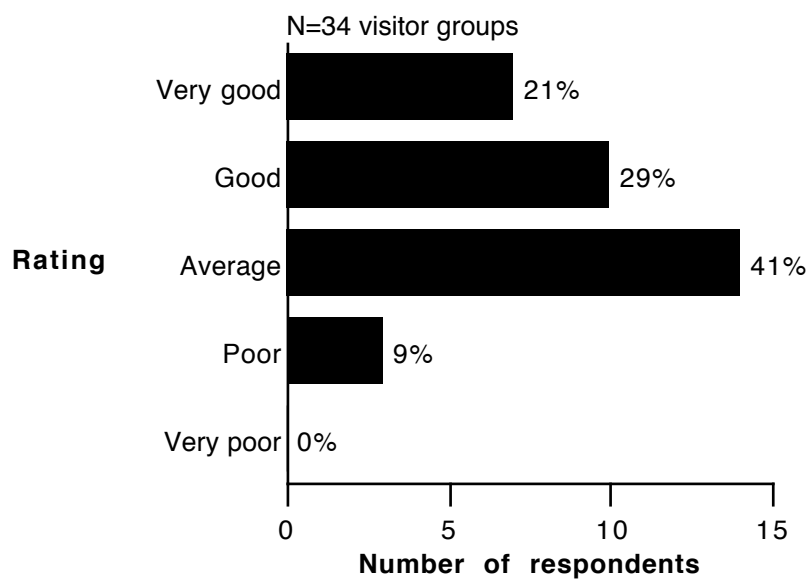
**Figure 48: Quality of highway directional signs**



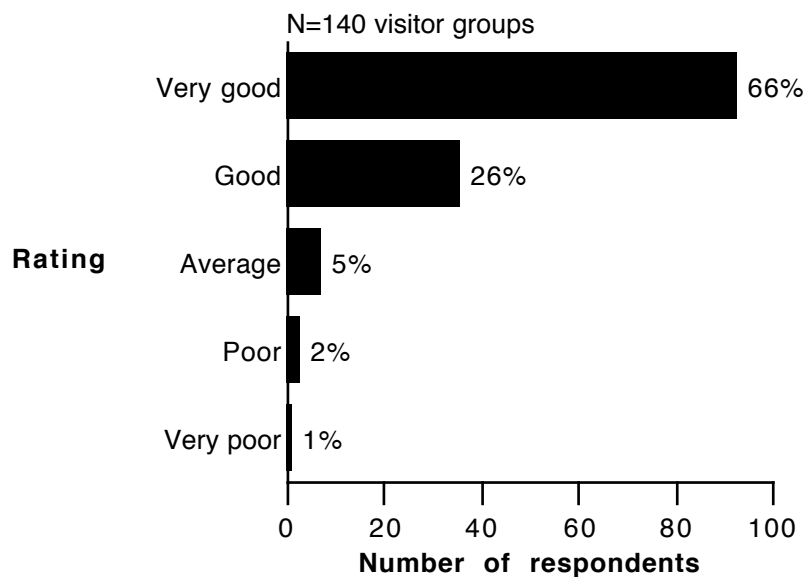
**Figure 49: Quality of brochure/map**



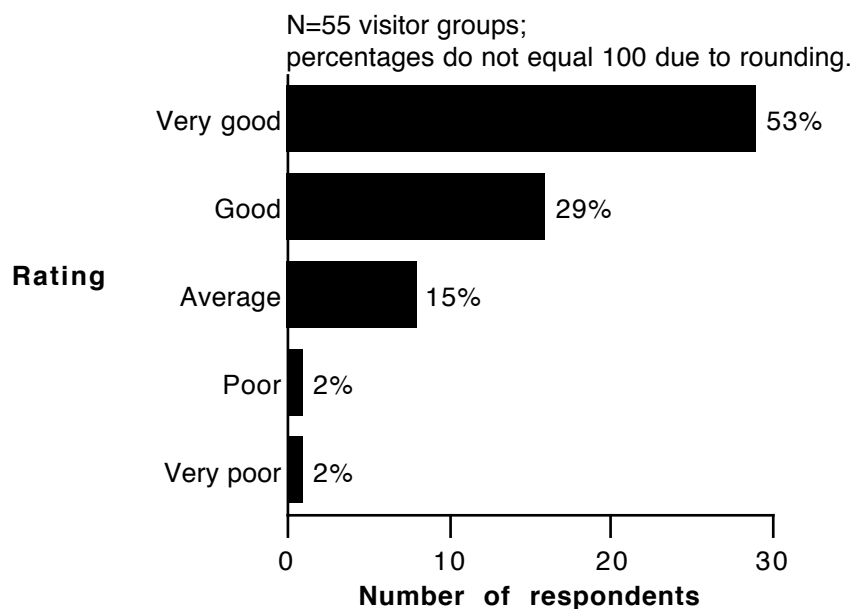
**Figure 50: Quality of trail guides**



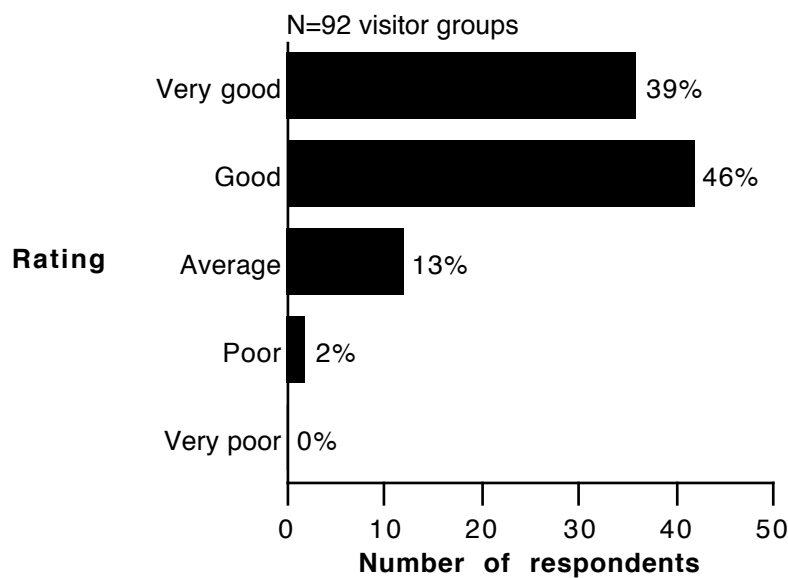
**Figure 51: Quality of bookstore**



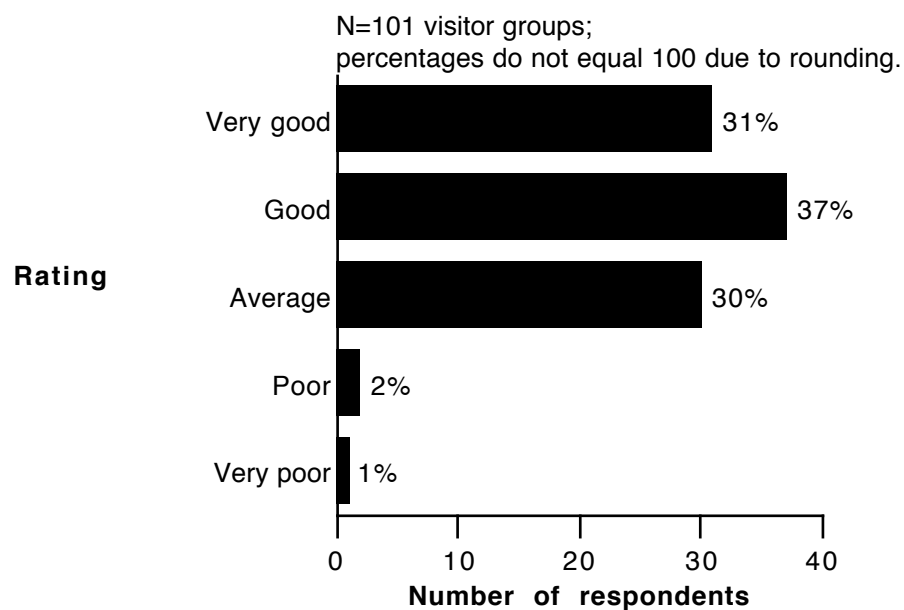
**Figure 52: Quality of Thomas Condon Center exhibits**



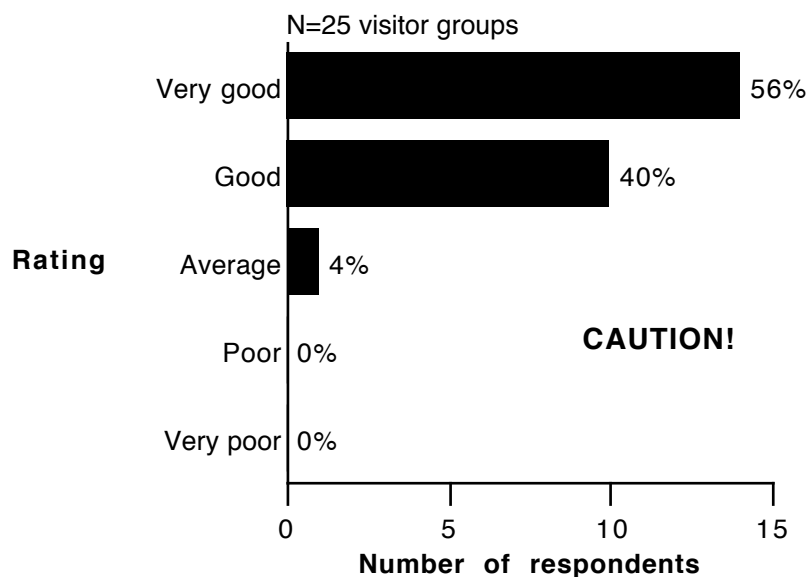
**Figure 53: Quality of James Cant Ranch exhibits**



**Figure 54: Quality of trail exhibits**

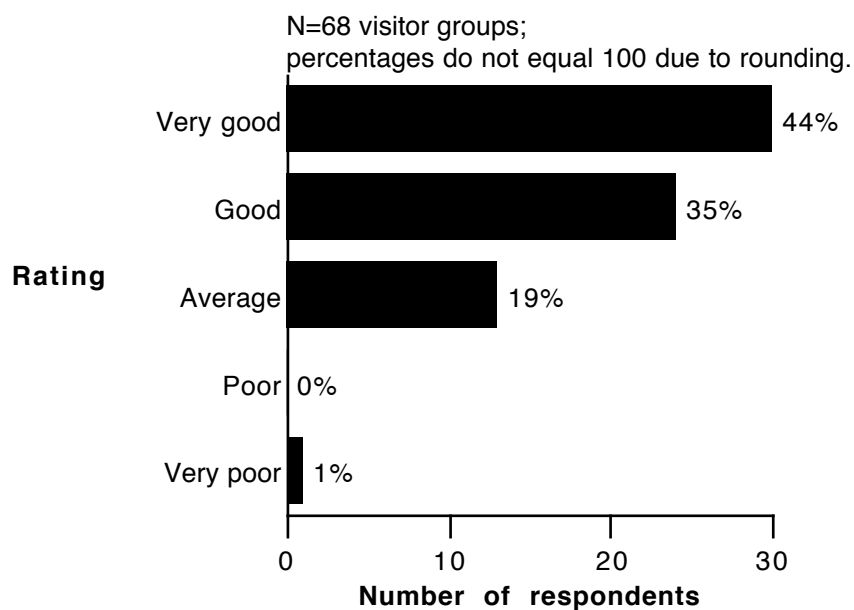


**Figure 55: Quality of roadside exhibits**

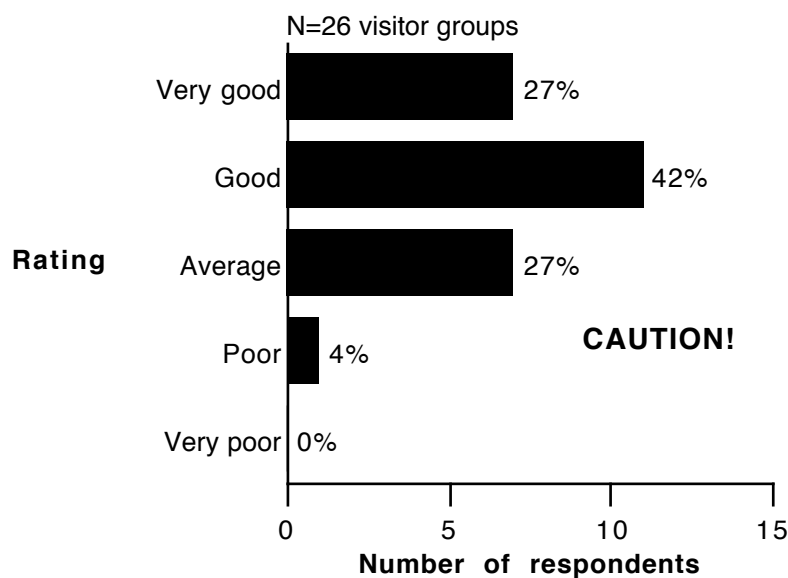


**Figure 56: Quality of ranger talk/program**





**Figure 57: Quality of film/videos**



**Figure 58: Quality of park website**

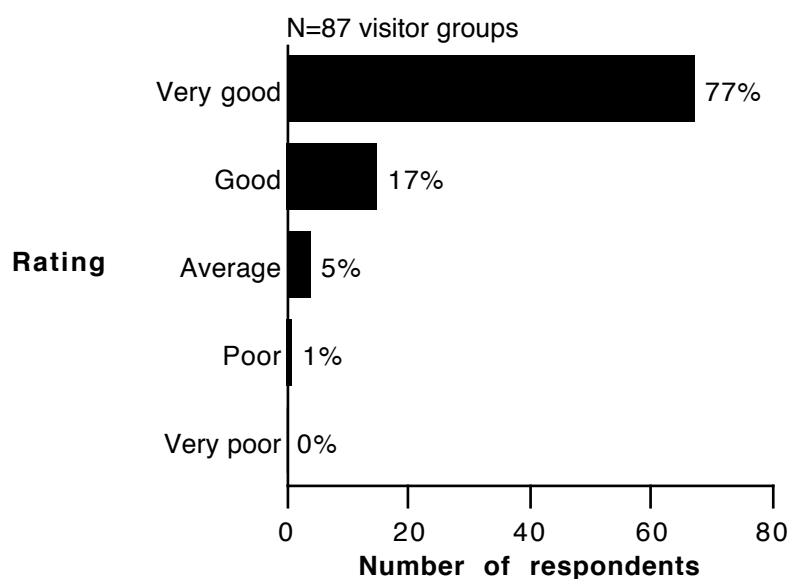


Figure 59: Quality of assistance from park staff

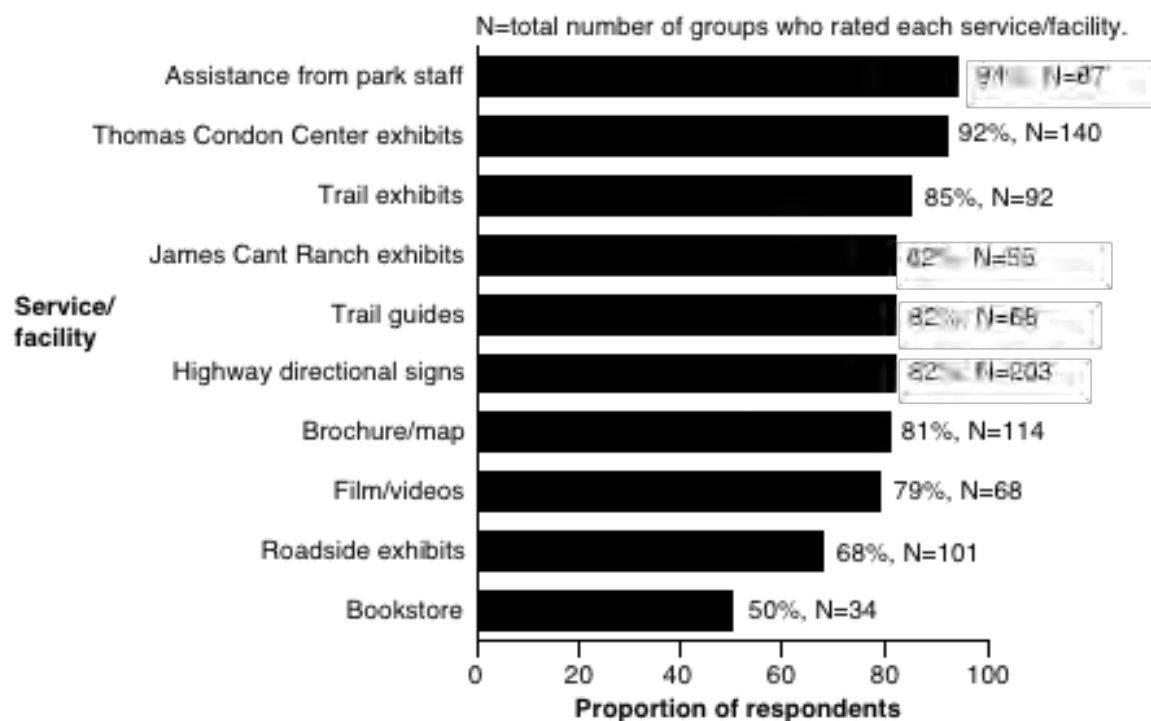
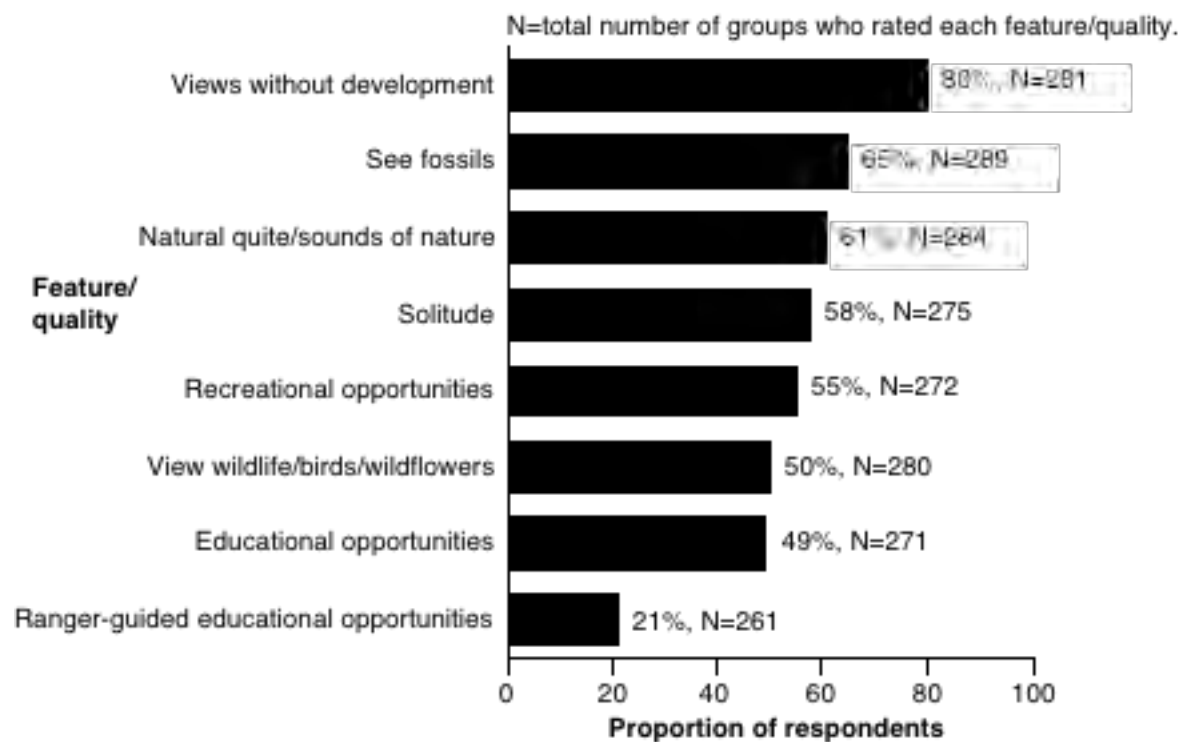


Figure 60: Combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings for visitor services and facilities

### Importance of selected features/qualities

Table 8 shows visitor ratings for selected features/qualities and Figure 61 shows the combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings. Views without development (80%), seeing fossils (65%), and natural quiet/sounds of nature (61%) were the features/qualities that received the highest “extremely important” and “very important” ratings. Ranger-guided educational opportunities (28%) was the feature that received the highest “not important” rating.

<b>Table 8: Importance ratings for selected features/qualities</b> N=number of visitor groups who rated each feature/quality; percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.							
Feature/quality	N	Rating (%)					
		Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know
Seeing fossils	289	35	30	22	8	4	1
View wildlife/birds/ wildflowers	280	18	32	30	14	5	2
Natural quiet/ sounds of nature	284	32	29	23	10	6	1
Views without development	281	54	26	10	4	3	2
Solitude	275	33	25	21	10	7	3
Ranger-guided educational opportunities	261	10	11	22	20	28	10
Educational opportunities	271	23	26	27	11	10	4
Recreational opportunities	272	29	26	21	11	10	4



**Figure 61: Combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings for selected features/qualities**

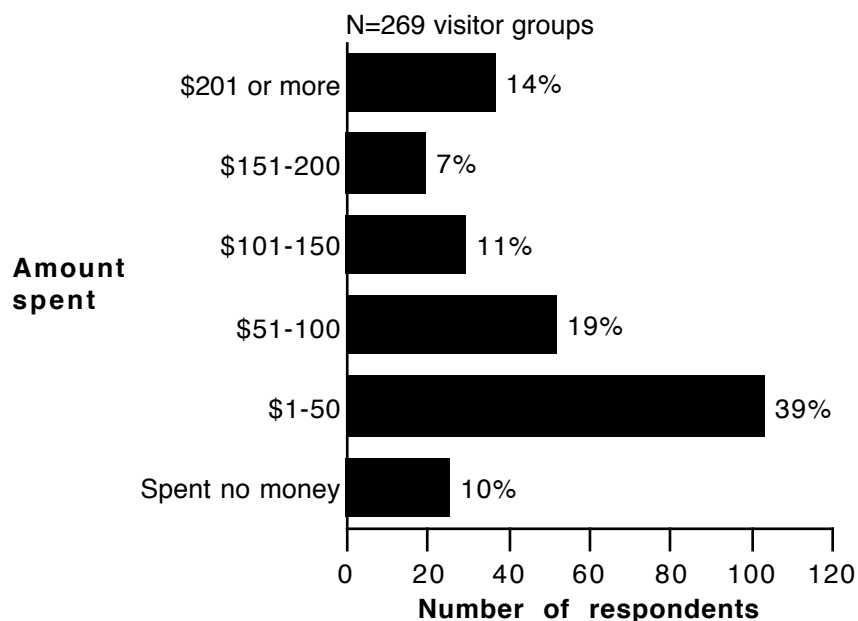
### Total expenditures

Visitor groups were asked to list the amount of money they spent on their visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM. Groups were asked to list the amounts they spent for lodging; camping fees; guide fees; restaurants and bars; groceries and takeout food; gas and oil; other transportation expenses; admission, recreation, and entertainment fees; all other purchases; and donations.

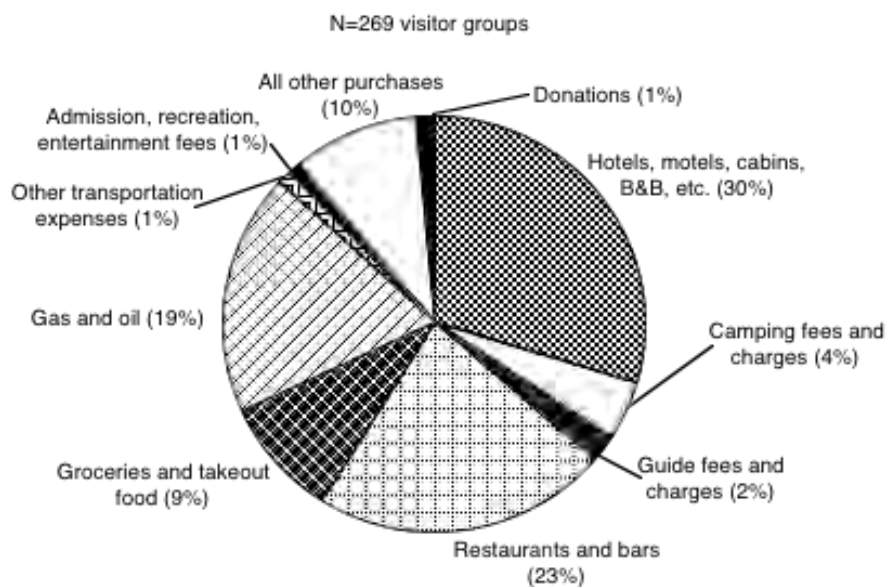
For total expenditures in and outside of John Day Fossil Beds NM (within 50 miles of any unit), 39% of visitor groups spent between \$1 and \$50 during their visit and 19% spent between \$51 and \$100 (see Figure 62). The greatest proportion of expenditures (30%) was for hotels, motels, cabins, etc., followed by restaurants and bars (23%), and gas and oil (19%), as shown in Figure 63.

The average visitor group expenditure during the visit was \$108. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$58. The average per capita expenditure was \$50.

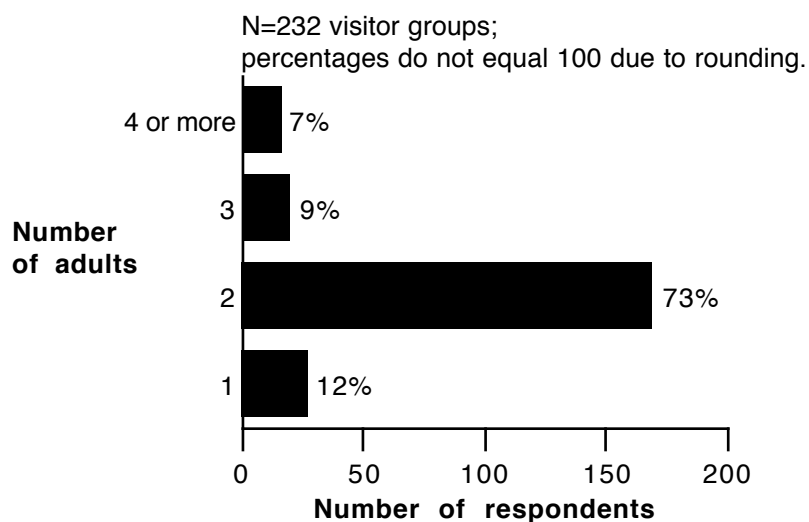
Visitor groups were asked to list how many adults (18 years or older) and children (under 18 years) were covered by their expenditures. Seventy-three percent of visitor groups had two adults, while 12% had one adult (see Figure 64). Figure 65 shows that 38% of groups did not visit the park with children, 30% had two children, and 20% had one child covered by the expenditures.



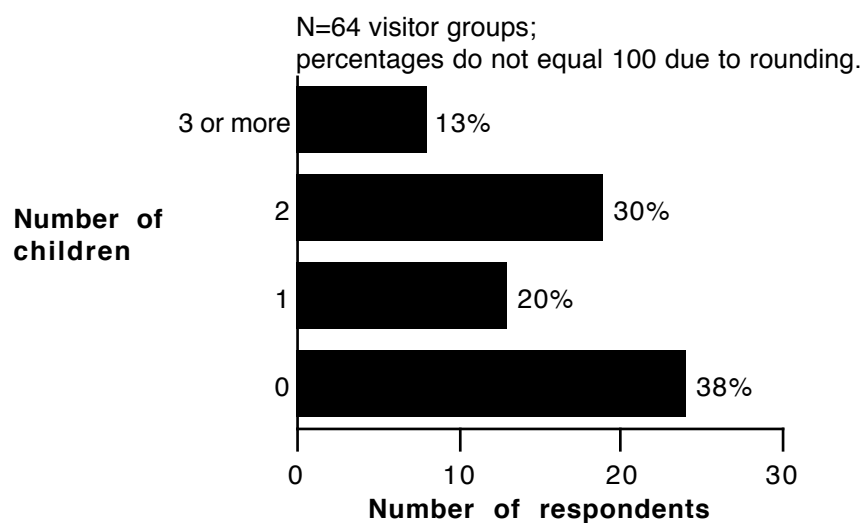
**Figure 62: Total expenditures in and out of park during this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM**



**Figure 63: Proportions of total expenditures in and out of park during this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM**



**Figure 64: Number of adults covered by expenditures**



**Figure 65: Number of children covered by expenditures**

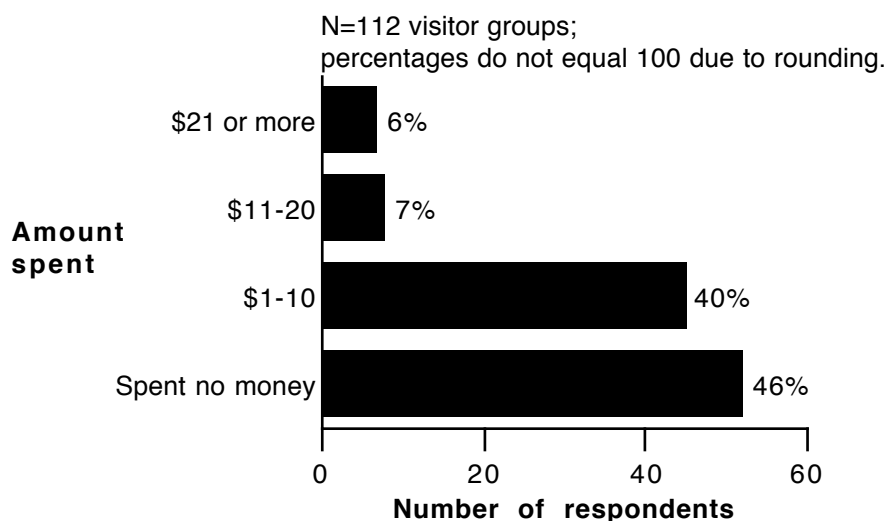
### Expenditures inside park

**Total expenditures inside park:** Forty-six percent of visitor groups spent no money and 40% spent up to \$10 (see Figure 66). All other purchases accounted for 70% of total expenditures inside John Day Fossil Beds NM and another 30% was for donations inside park (see Figure 67).

The average visitor group expenditure inside park during this visit was \$6. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$2. The average per capita expenditure was \$5.

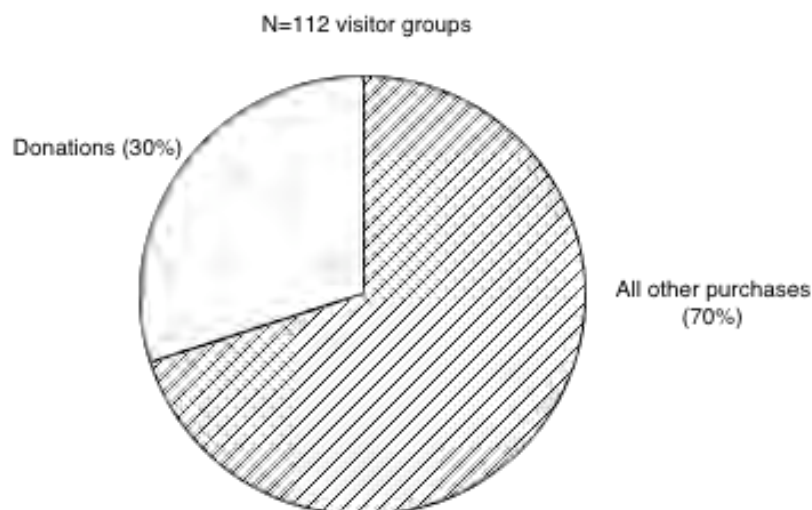
**All other purchases inside park:** Sixty-three percent of visitor groups spent no money and 23% spent up to \$10 (see Figure 68).

**Donations inside park:** Most visitor groups (60%) did not donate any money at inside John Day Fossil Beds NM and 39% donated up to \$10 (see Figure 69).

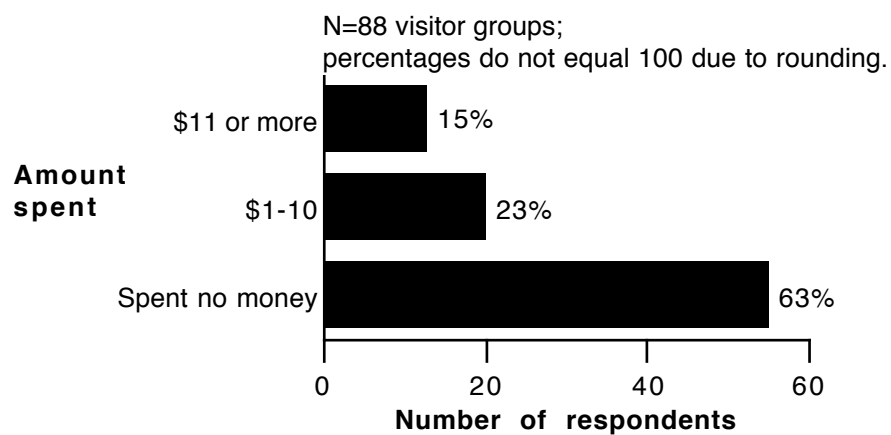


**Figure 66: Total expenditures inside park**

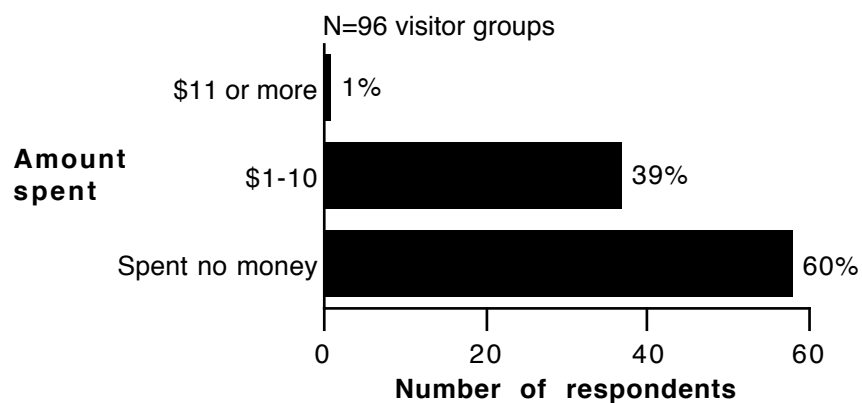




**Figure 67: Proportions of expenditures inside park**



**Figure 68: Expenditures for all other purchases inside park**



**Figure 69: Expenditures for donations inside park**

## Expenditures outside park

### **Total expenditures in the area outside park (within 50 miles of any unit):**

Thirty-five percent of visitor groups spent up to \$50 and another 21% spent between \$51 and \$100 outside the park, on this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM (see Figure 70).

The largest proportions of expenditures outside John Day Fossil Beds NM were hotels, motels, cabins, B&B. etc. (30%), restaurants and bars (23%), and gas and oil (19%), as shown in Figure 71.

The average visitor group expenditure outside park during this visit was \$108. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$60. The average per capita expenditure was \$57.

**Hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc. outside park:** Over one-half of visitor groups (57%) spent no money, 26% spent between \$51 and \$100, and another 13% spent \$101 or more (see Figure 72).

**Camping fees and charges outside park:** Sixty-four percent of visitor groups spent no money and 23% spent up to \$20 on this visit (see Figure 73).

**Guide fees and charges outside park:** Most visitor groups (98%) spent no money (see Figure 74).

**Restaurants and bars outside park:** Thirty-three percent of visitor groups spent no money, 25% spent up to \$20, and 16% spent between \$21 and \$40, as shown in Figure 75.

**Groceries and takeout food outside park:** Thirty-nine percent of visitor groups spent no money and another 39% spent up to \$20 (see Figure 76).

**Gas and oil outside park:** Twenty-nine percent of visitor groups spent between \$21 and \$40 and 28% spent no money, as shown in Figure 77.

**Other transportation expenses outside park:** Most visitor groups (97%) spent no money, as shown in Figure 78.

**Admission, recreation, and entertainment fees outside park:** Eighty-seven percent of visitor groups spent no money and 11% spent up to \$20 (see Figure 79).

**All other purchases outside park:** Most visitor groups (70%) spent no money and 18% spent up to \$20, as shown in Figure 80.

**Donations outside park:** Most visitor groups (83%) did not donate any money and 17% donated up to \$20 (see Figure 81).

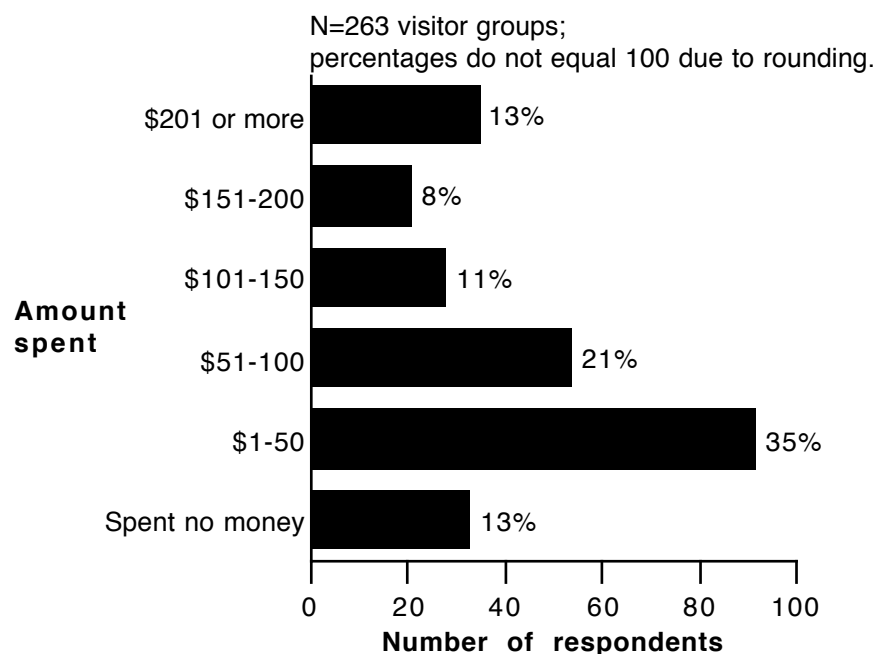


Figure 70: Total expenditures outside park (within 50 miles)

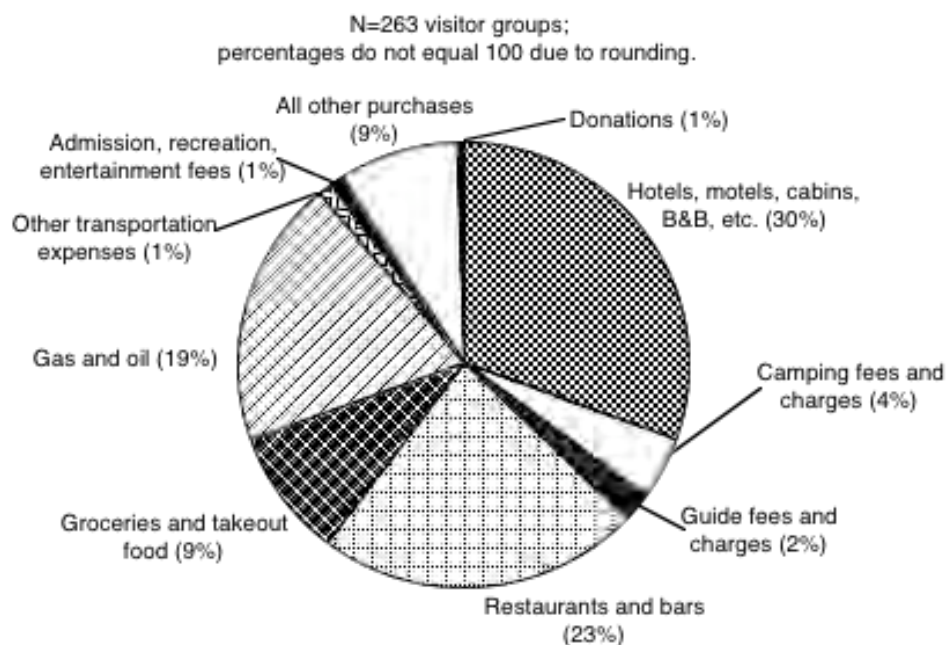
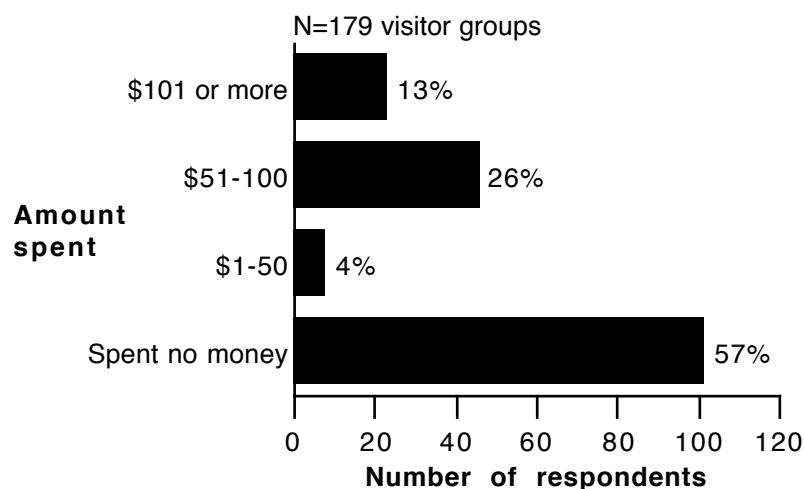
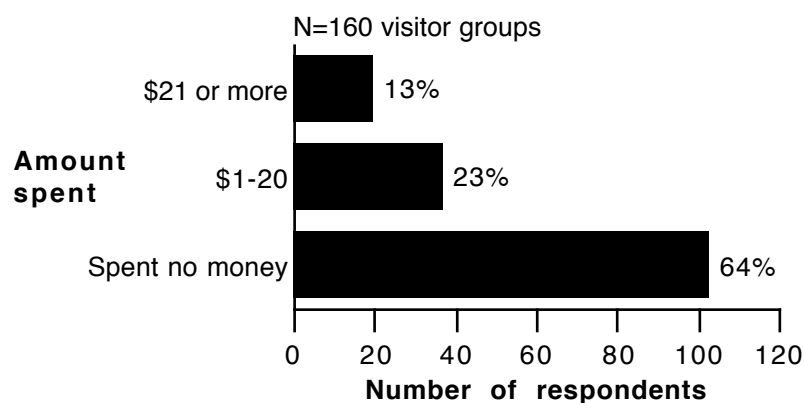


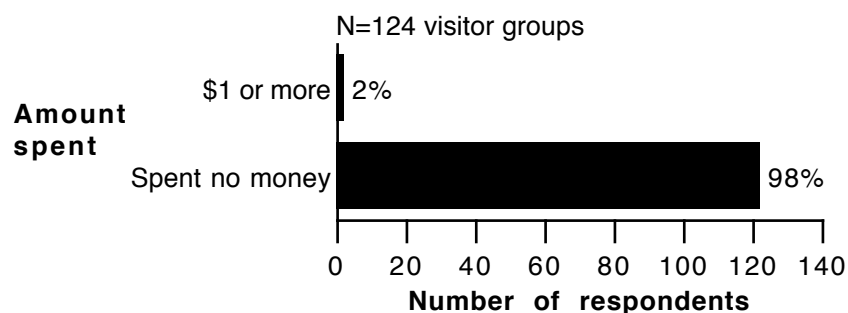
Figure 71: Proportions of total expenditures outside park



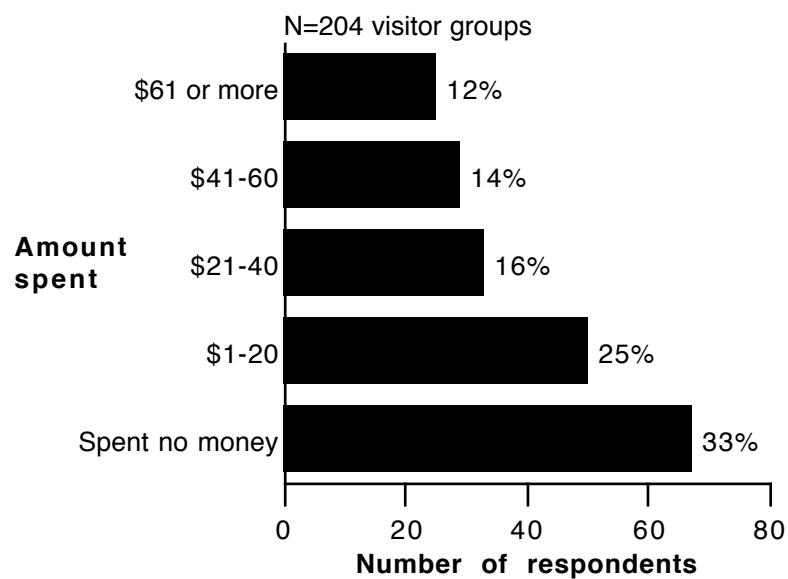
**Figure 72: Expenditures for hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc. outside park**



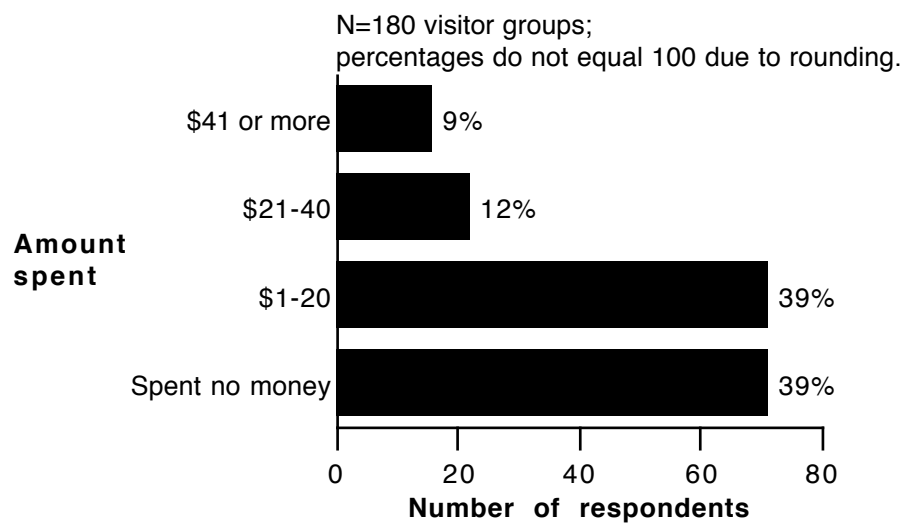
**Figure 73: Expenditures for camping fees and charges outside park**



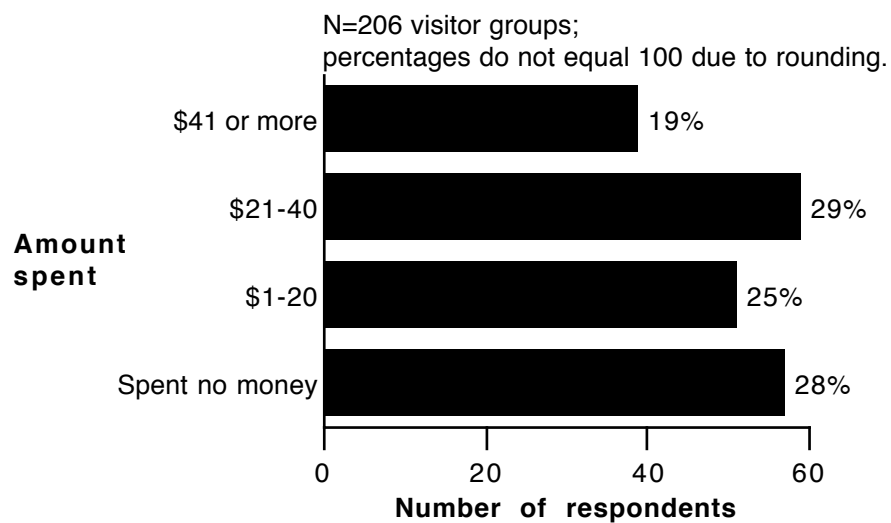
**Figure 74: Expenditures for guide fees and charges outside park**



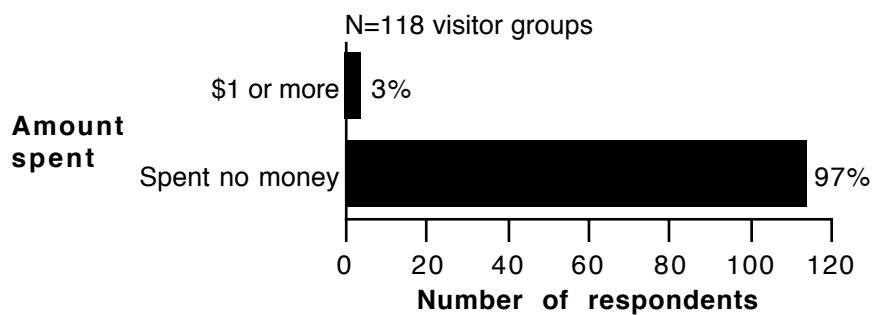
**Figure 75: Expenditures for restaurants and bars outside park**



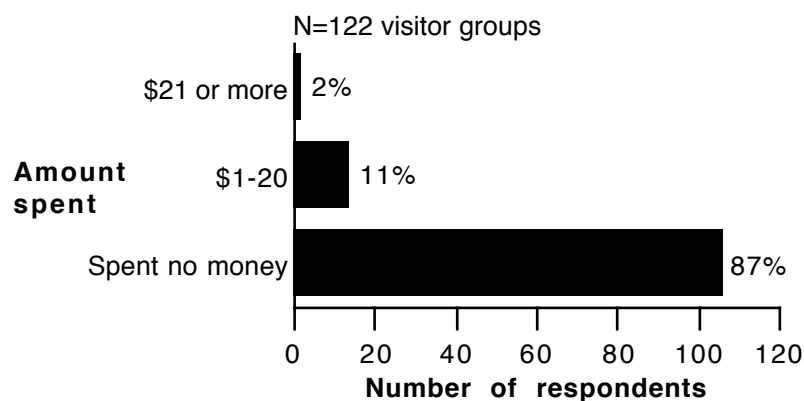
**Figure 76: Expenditures for groceries and takeout food outside park**



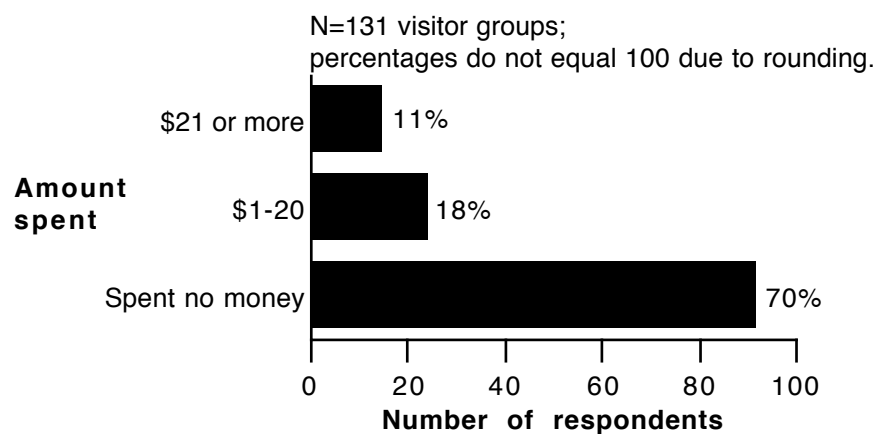
**Figure 77: Expenditures for gas and oil outside park**



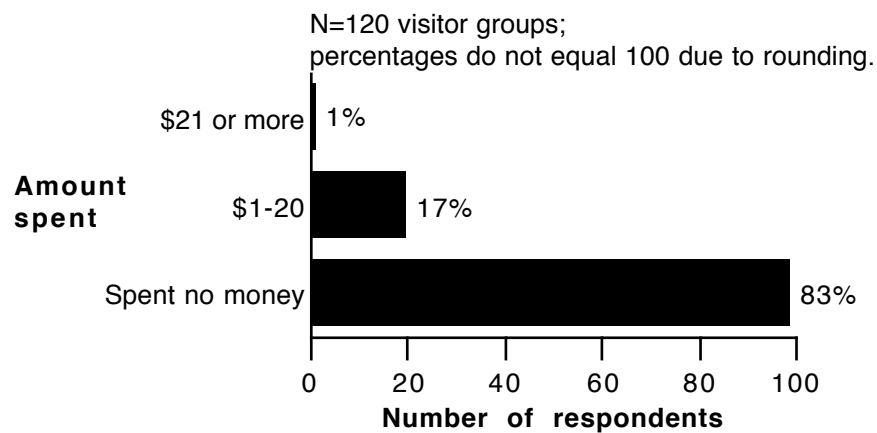
**Figure 78: Expenditures for other transportation expenses outside park**



**Figure 79: Expenditures for admission, recreation, and entertainment fees outside park**



**Figure 80: Expenditures for all other purchases outside park**

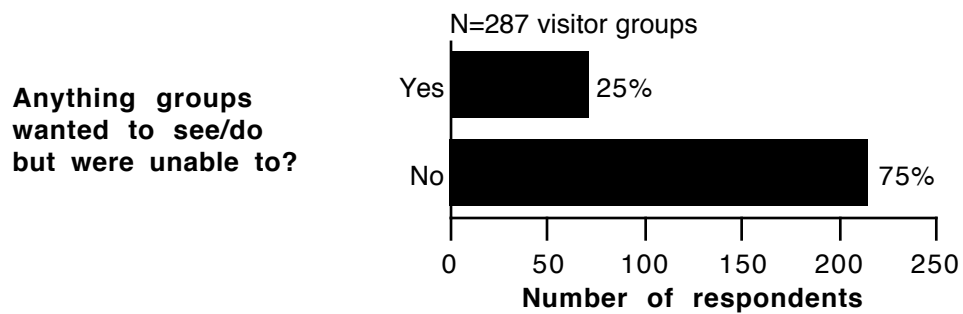


**Figure 81: Expenditures for donations outside park**

**Visitor expectations**

Visitor groups were asked, “During this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM, was there anything specific which you and your group wanted to see or do, but were not able to?” Most visitor groups (75%) reported that there was nothing else that they wanted to see or do but were not able to, as shown in Figure 82. However, 25% of visitor groups reported being unable to see or do things that they wanted to.

Visitor groups were then asked to explain what they expected to see or do and what prevented from seeing or doing them. Table 9 lists things that visitor groups were not be able to see or do. Table 10 lists the obstacles that prevent visitors from meeting their expectations.



**Figure 82: Visitors who were unable to do or see what they wanted**



**Table 9:Visitor expectations**

N=74 comments

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Walk/hike on trails	16
See more fossils	9
Spend more time to explore	5
Dig fossils to take home	4
Attend ranger talk/walk	4
Visit Thomas Condon Paleontology Center	3
See other park units	3
Visit Painted Hills	3
Visit Clarno Unit	3
See animal fossils	2
See all things to see	2
Find a place to walk with small children	2
Picnic	2
Purchase fossils for souvenir	2
Walk out to fossil bed, see it in rock	2
Visit Blue Basin overlook	2
See prehistoric footprint on trail	1
See rattlesnakes	1
Visit Chinese Museum	1
See Native American paintings in picture gorge	1
Fishing	1
See more exhibits	1
Visit James Cant Ranch	1
Buy books	1
Photography	1
Talk to a paleontologist	1

**Table 10: Reasons for not being able to see or do what visitors expected**

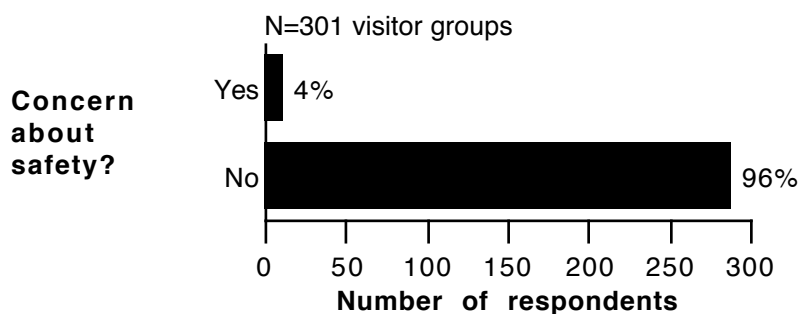
N=68 comments

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Did not have enough time	31
Walking out to the fossil beds was not allowed	4
Visitor center closed	4
Did not see fossils	4
Bad weather (hot and windy)	4
Physical limitation	3
Not enough fossils on display	2
No RV campsite in park	2
No fossils/replica of fossils for sale	2
Nothing bad, just want to see more fossils	2
Ranger-led tours were not available	2
No rattlesnakes around	1
Ranger hike took longer than expected	1
Did not find trails	1
Did not know there were picnic areas	1
Read about prehistoric footprint in a book but rangers did not know about it	1
Travel with small children	1
Interpretation sign said monument employees were not to tell us where to look for Native American paintings in picture gorge	1
Too few book sales at the visitor center	1

### Safety concerns

During this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM, most visitor groups (96%) did not have any specific safety concerns (see Figure 83). However, 4% of visitor groups had some safety concerns.

Visitor groups who had safety concerns were then asked to explain their concerns. Visitor safety concern included rattlesnakes, scorpions, spiders, steep and narrow trails at Clarno Unit, not enough room to safely pull off the road, road conditions between Fossil and Hepner, walking on loose gravel, and rangers were not aware of hikers' locations.



**Figure 83: Visitor groups who had specific safety concern**

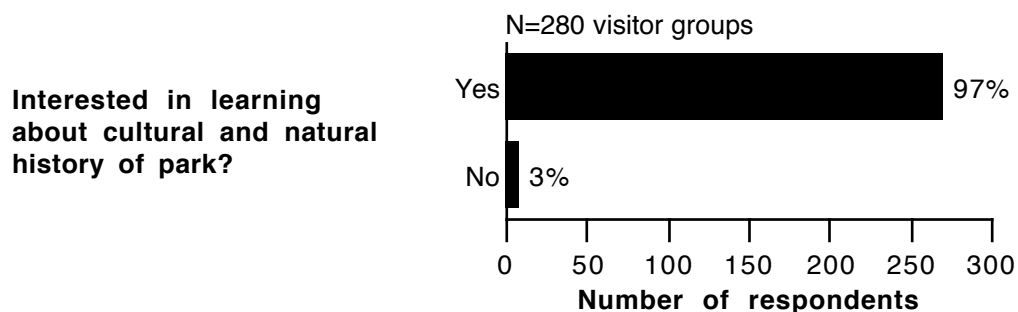
**Preferred learning methods about park on a future visit**

Most visitor groups (97%) reported that they were interested in learning about the cultural and natural history of John Day Fossil Beds NM on a future visit and 3% were not interested, as shown in Figure 84. Visitor groups who were interested in learning were then asked to select three methods that they would prefer to use on a future visit.

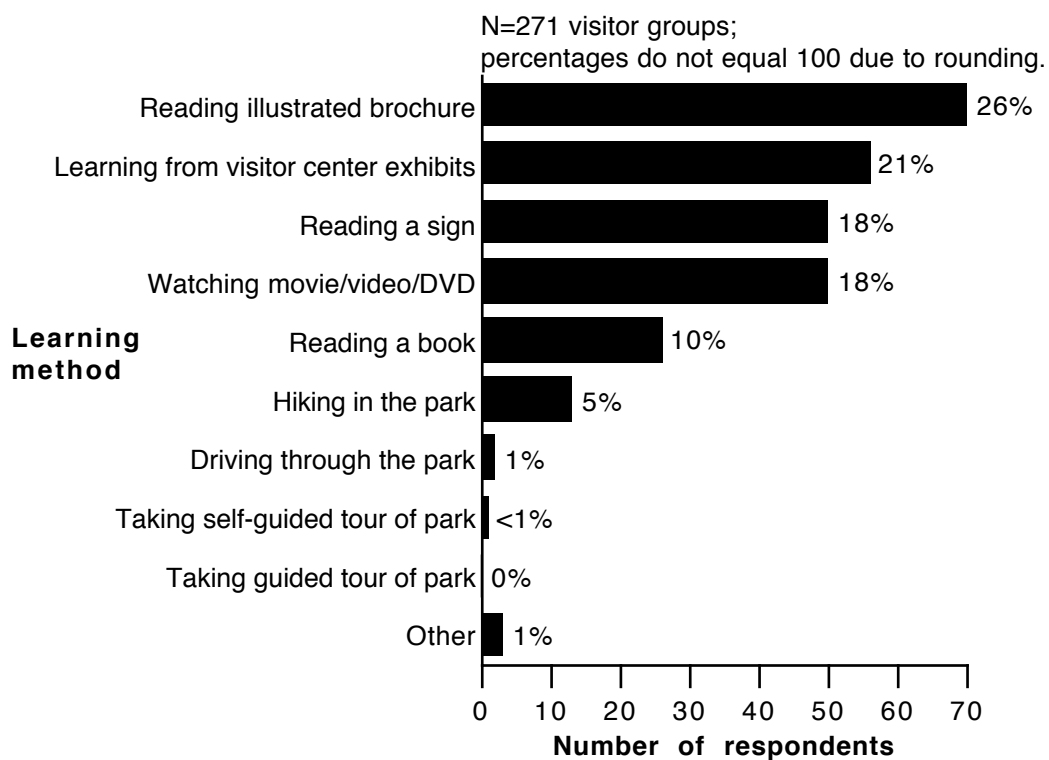
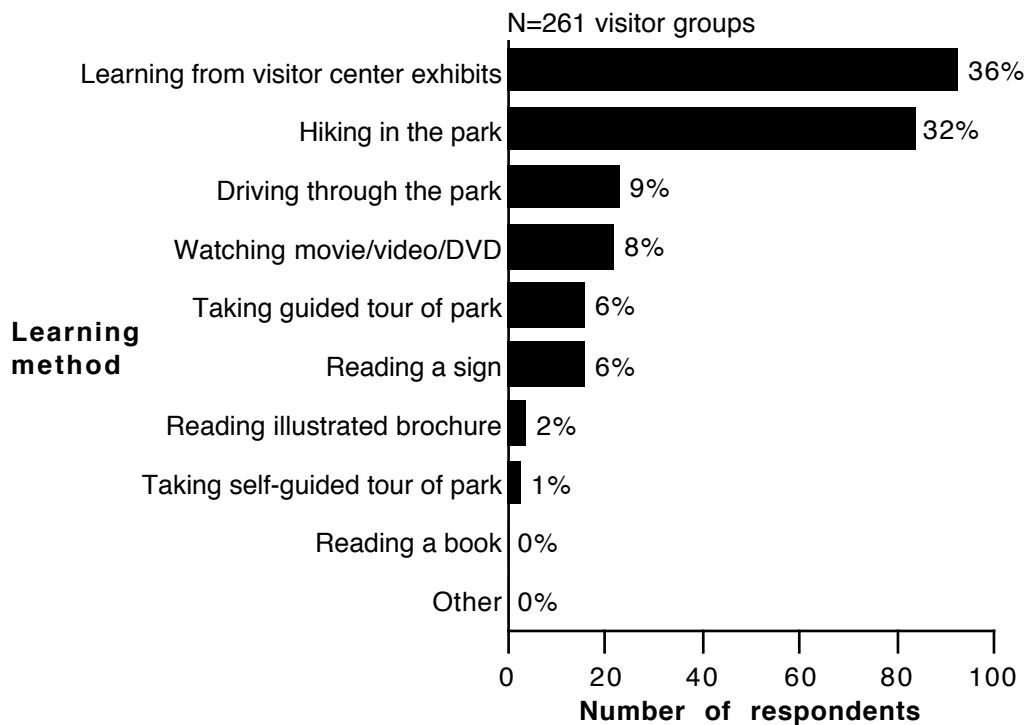
The most common first choice of learning methods included reading illustrated brochure (26%), learning from visitor center exhibits (21%), reading a sign (18%), and watching movie/video/DVD (18%), as shown in Figure 85.

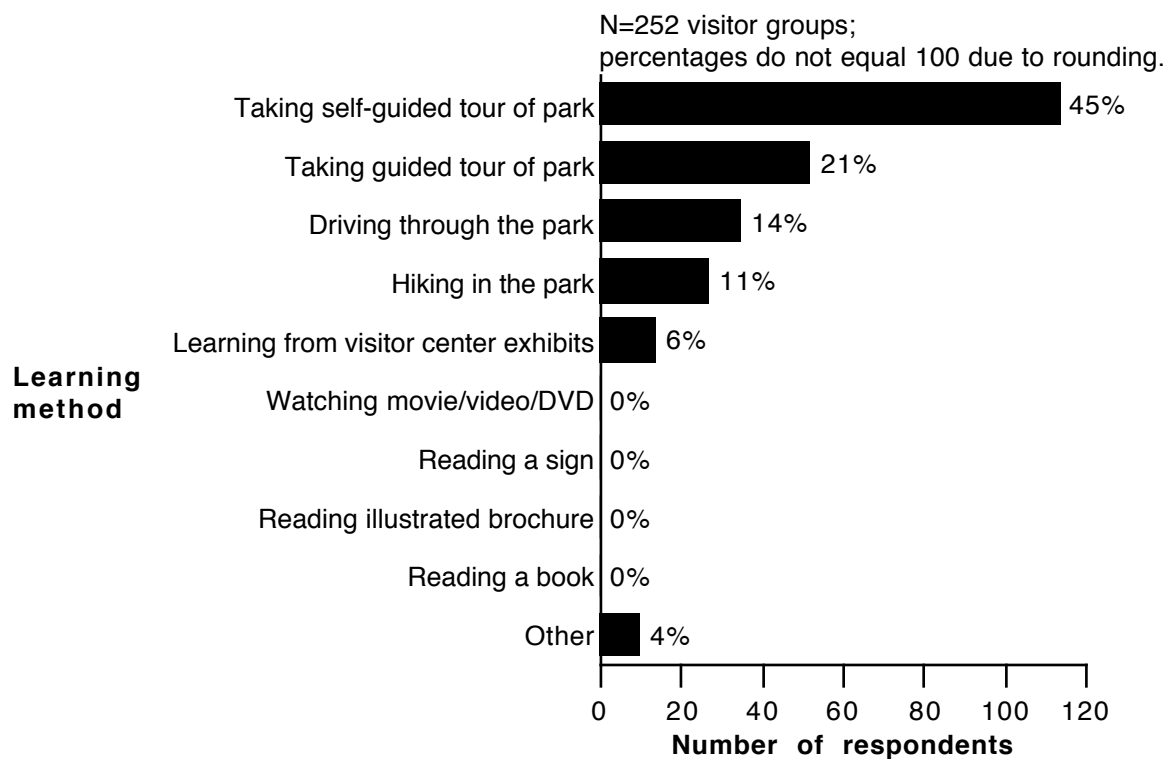
The most common second choice of preferred learning methods included learning from visitor center exhibits (36%) and hiking in the park (32%), as shown in Figure 89. Taking self-guided tour of park (45%) and taking guided tour of park (21%) were the most common third choice of preferred learning methods (see Figure 86).

“Other” learning methods included self-guided audio-CD tours, maps showing where the fossils were found, a visitor center on the west side of monument, evening programs, internet, conversations with paleontologist/archeologist, and designated area for people to find fossils.



**Figure 84: Visitor groups who were interested in learning about cultural and natural history of park**

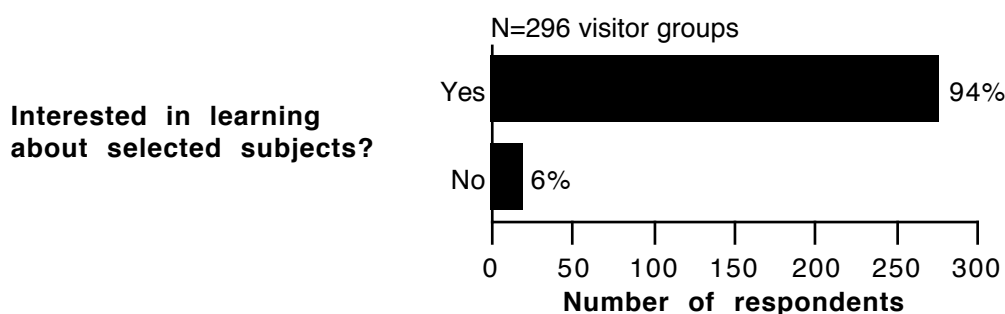
**Figure 85: First choice of learning method****Figure 86: Second choice of learning method**



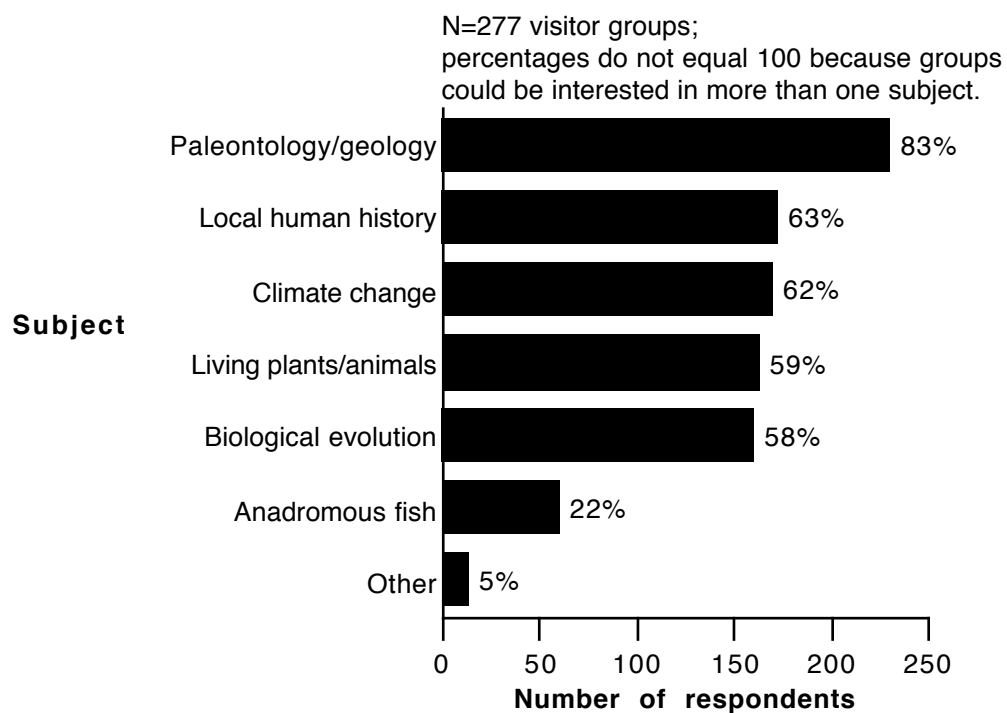
**Figure 87: Third choice of learning method**

**Preferred subjects to learn on a future visit**

Most visitor groups (94%) were interested in learning different subjects at John Day Fossil Beds NM on a future visit while 6% were not interested in learning, as shown in Figure 88. Visitor groups who were interested in learning were then asked to indicate what subjects they would be interested in learning about. The subjects that visitor groups were interested in learning about the most included paleontology/geology (83%), local human history (63%), and climate change (62%), as shown in Figure 89. “Other” subjects that visitor groups were interested in learning about included dragonflies, butterflies, reptiles, mineral content of rock and soil in the area, on-going studies in park, current climate information, history of area as it pertains to settlement, and current park issues/controversies.



**Figure 88: Visitor groups who were interested in learning about selected subjects on a future visit**

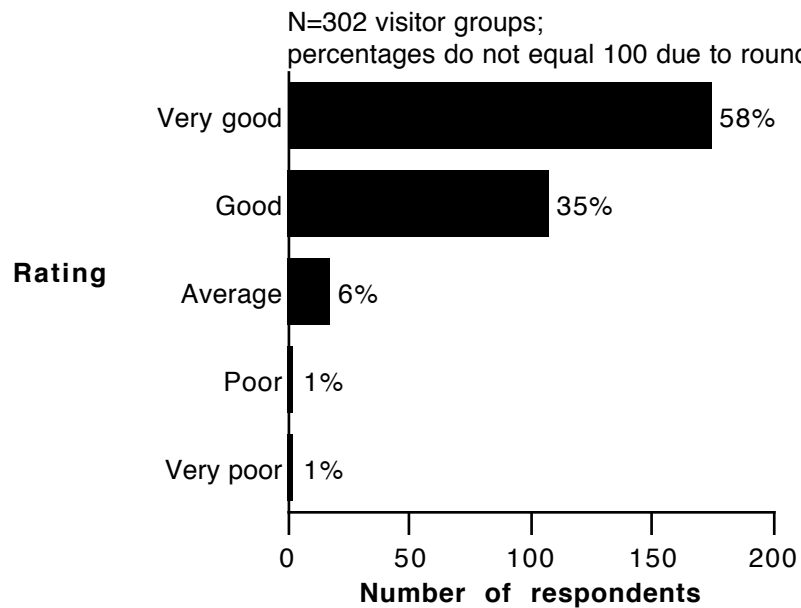


**Figure 89: Preferred subjects on a future visit**



**Overall quality of visitor services**

Visitor groups were asked to rate the overall quality of visitor services on this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM. Most visitor groups (93%) rated the overall quality as “very good” or “good,” as shown in Figure 90. Two percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very poor” or “poor.”



**Figure 90: Overall quality of visitor services**

<b>What visitors liked most</b>
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Eighty-nine percent of visitor groups (N=277 groups) provided comments about what they liked most about this visit to John Day Fossils Beds NM. Table 11 presents summary of these comments.

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**Table 11: What visitors like most**

N=402 comments;

some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Knowledgeable and helpful rangers	8
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
Exhibits	17
Availability of information	11
Educational opportunity	8
Film at visitor center	6
Seeing scientists working	6
Knowing area being protected	6
Ranger talk	3
Historical information	3
Other comments	7
<b>FACILITIES</b>	
Thomas Condon Paleontology Center	44
Well marked and easy hike trails	20
James Cant Ranch House	9
Well maintained facilities	7
Clean restrooms	5
Clean park	2
Nice picnic area	2
Other comments	1
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
Painted Hills	32
Geology/rock formations	12
Remoteness/uncrowded	9
Wildlife/plants	3
Other comments	8

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**Table 11: What visitors like most  
(continued)**

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	
Scenery	65
Seeing fossils	28
Natural beauty	21
Hiking	18
Quiet/solitude	15
Everything	5
Ability to collect fossils	4
Photographic opportunity	2
Other comments	15

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<b>What visitors liked least</b>
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Table 12 shows the comments made by 183 visitor groups (59%) regarding what they liked least about this visit to John Day Fossil Bed NM. Some comments were about external conditions such as weather and others were park specific concerns.

**Table 12: What visitor liked least**

N=187 comments;  
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Comments	2
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
Not enough specimen displayed at the visitor center	9
Lack of fossils along trails	6
Incomplete visitor center	6
Lack of sales items in bookstore	4
Not enough ranger-led walk/tour	4
Did not know the park has more than one unit	3
Other comments	8
<b>FACILITIES</b>	
No campground in park	4
Poor road directional signs	4
Limited overnight facilities	3
No safe place to pull off RV for overlook	3
Lack of longer trails to hike	3
Lack of service/restaurant nearby	2
Other comments	7
<b>POLICIES/MANAGEMENT</b>	
Not allowed to dig/touch fossils	4
Too much money spent on building the new visitor center	4
Not allowed to walk to the fossil beds	4
Signs of vandalism on trails	2
Other comments	2
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	
Nothing to dislike	52
Not enough time to explore more	12
Heat	8
Long drive/far distance to park	8
Bad weather	4
Did not have advanced information about park, did not know what to expect	4
Long winding road	3
Other comments	12

### Visitor opinions about national significance of park

Visitor groups were asked to provide comments about the national significance of John Day Fossil Beds NM. Seventy-four percent of visitor groups (N=230 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 13 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

**Table 13: Visitor opinions about national significance of park**

N=352 comments;  
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Fossil record	34
Preserve park resources	32
Place of scientific study/research	28
Education	21
Demonstrates evolution	20
National history	20
Beautiful landscape	16
Preserved for scientific study/research/education	15
Geology	13
Provide perspective of time and place	13
Natural beauty of Painted Hills	12
Unique landscape/natural setting	12
Record of geological history	9
Unique fossil record	9
Preserved for enjoyment	8
Unique/rare geology	8
High geological significance	7
Natural environment	7
Park has spectacular scenery	7
Preserves history	6
Record of climate change	6
Unique	6
Local history	4
Provide uncrowded outdoor experience	3
A national treasure/wonder	2
Largest fossil bed in USA	2
Opportunity for conservation	2
Park has aesthetic value	2
Park has historical, not national significance	2
Park has something for everyone	2
Unique example of evolutionary process	2
Volcanic history	2
Not enough information to answer question	3
Other	17

<b>Additional comments</b>
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Fifty percent of visitor groups (N=155 groups) wrote additional comments. Their comments about John Day Fossil Beds NM are summarized below (see Table 14).

Complete copies of visitor comments are included in the appendix.

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**Table 14: Additional comments**

N=225 comments;  
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Park staff were knowledgeable and helpful	14
Other comment	1
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
Well organized and informative visitor center	8
Very educational	7
Display more fossil specimens at visitor center	7
Advertise more about park	6
Add more ranger-led walk/talk programs	5
Excellent displays and learning facilities for children	4
More information about history of the area	3
More information about Native American history in the area	2
Tag or mark fossils along trails for identifying	2
Add another visitor center on west side	2
More information about geological history of Painted Hills	2
Other comments	8
<b>FACILITY/MAINTENANCE</b>	
Well maintained facilities	5
Continue improving Thomas Condon Paleontology Center	4
Upgrade road signs to match with names on park map; include distance	4
Add snacks and more souvenir items at bookstore area	4
Add longer hiking trails	3
Consider adding some tourist facilities	3
Need better signs for RV indicating ability to turn around	2
Clean facilities	2
Nice recycle bins	2
Other comments	5

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**Table 14: Additional comments  
(continued)**

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
Expand the monument to protect more land	4
Keep park uncrowded	4
James Cant Ranch House is a treasure	4
Keep it as natural as possible	3
Well balanced between protecting the area and making it accessible to all	3
Create a designated area where people can dig/touch fossils	2
Other comment	1
<b>POLICIES/MANAGEMENT</b>	
Appreciate park did not charge entrance fees	2
Other comments	4
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	
Will come back to explore more	22
Enjoyed our visit	15
Breathtaking view	7
Glad that we decided to visit, park has a lot to offer	6
Long survey	5
This visit was too short. We plan to come back to visit all park units	5
Peaceful/quiet/relaxing	4
We visit park often. This park is our favorite destinations	4
Keep up the good work	3
Like the feeling of a wide open space	3
Beautiful weather	2
Other comments	17





**ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS**  
**John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**  
**VSP Report 162**

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) offers the opportunity to learn more from VSP visitor study data. Additional analysis can be done using the park's VSP visitor study data that was collected and entered into the computer. Two-way and three-way cross tabulations can be made of any of the characteristics listed below. Be as specific as possible-you may select a single program/service/facility instead of all that were listed in the questionnaire. Include your name, address, and phone number in the request.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| • Visitor awareness of NPS management of park            | • Length of visit                           | • State/country of residence                              |
| • Sources of information prior to visit                  | • Units visited                             | • Number of visits in lifetime                            |
| • Visitor groups who received needed information         | • Sites visited                             | • Visitors with disabilities/impairments                  |
| • Primary reason to visit this part of eastern Oregon    | • Sites visited first                       | • Visitors who encountered access/service problem in park |
| • Adequacy of directional road signs                     | • Visitor services/facilities used          | • Total expenditures                                      |
| • Forms of transportation                                | • Importance of visitor services/facilities | • Expenditures inside park                                |
| • Number of nights stayed away from home in the area     | • Quality of visitor services/facilities    | • Expenditures outside park                               |
| • Overnight accommodations                               | • Group type                                | • Visitor unmet expectations                              |
| • Gateway communities                                    | • Visitors with a guided tour group         | • Importance of selected park features/qualities          |
| • Services used in gateway communities                   | • Group size                                | • Safety concerns   |
| • Services would use in gateway communities if available | • Number of vehicles                        | • Preferred learning methods about park on a future visit |
| • Primary reason to visit park                           | • Gender                                    | • Preferred subjects to learn on a future visit           |
| • Activities   | • Age                                       | • Overall quality of visitor services                     |

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## **QUESTIONNAIRE**



## VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT PUBLICATIONS

Reports 1-6 (pilot studies) are available from the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit. All other VSP reports listed are available from the parks where the studies were conducted or from the UI PSU. All studies were conducted in summer unless otherwise noted.

### 1982

1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park.

### 1983

2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method.
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt Rushmore National Memorial.
4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park.

### 1985

5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex
6. Crater Lake National Park

### 1986

7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence National Historical Park
9. Valley Forge National Historical Park

### 1987

10. Colonial National Historical Park (summer & fall)
11. Grand Teton National Park
12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
13. Mesa Verde National Park
14. Shenandoah National Park (summer & fall)
15. Yellowstone National Park
16. Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study

### 1988

17. Glen Canyon National Recreational Area
18. Denali National Park and Preserve
19. Bryce Canyon National Park
20. Craters of the Moon National Monument

### 1989

21. Everglades National Park (winter)
22. Statue of Liberty National Monument
23. The White House Tours, President's Park
24. Lincoln Home National Historic Site
25. Yellowstone National Park
26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
27. Muir Woods National Monument

### 1990

28. Canyonlands National Park (spring)
29. White Sands National Monument
30. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park
32. Gateway National Recreation Area
33. Petersburg National Battlefield
34. Death Valley National Monument
35. Glacier National Park
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

### 1991

38. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park (spring)
39. Joshua Tree National Monument (spring)
40. The White House Tours, President's Park (spring)
41. Natchez Trace Parkway (spring)
42. Stehekin-North Cascades NP/ Lake Chelan NRA
43. City of Rocks National Reserve
44. The White House Tours, President's Park (fall)

### 1992

45. Big Bend National Park (spring)
46. Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (spring)
47. Glen Echo Park (spring)
48. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
49. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
50. Zion National Park
51. New River Gorge National River
52. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
53. Arlington House-The Robert E. Lee Memorial

### 1993

54. Belle Haven Park/Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve (spring)
55. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (spring)
56. Whitman Mission National Historic Site
57. Sitka National Historical Park
58. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
59. Redwood National Park
60. Channel Islands National Park
61. Pecos National Historical Park
62. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
63. Bryce Canyon National Park (fall)

**VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT PUBLICATIONS (continued)****1994**

- 64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry (winter)
- 65. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (spring)
- 66. Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center
- 67. Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts
- 68. Nez Perce National Historical Park
- 69. Edison National Historic Site
- 70. San Juan Island National Historical Park
- 71. Canaveral National Seashore
- 72. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (fall)
- 73. Gettysburg National Military Park (fall)

**1995**

- 74. Grand Teton National Park (winter)
- 75. Yellowstone National Park (winter)
- 76. Bandelier National Monument
- 77. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
- 78. Adams National Historic Site
- 79. Devils Tower National Monument
- 80. Manassas National Battlefield Park
- 81. Booker T. Washington National Monument
- 82. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
- 83. Dry Tortugas National Park

**1996**

- 84. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 85. Chiricahua National Monument (spring)
- 86. Fort Bowie National Historic Site (spring)
- 87. Great Falls Park, Virginia (spring)
- 88. Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- 89. Chamizal National Memorial
- 90. Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 91. Prince William Forest Park (fall)
- 92. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer & fall)

**1997**

- 93. Virgin Islands National Park (winter)
- 94. Mojave National Preserve (spring)
- 95. Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site (spring)
- 96. Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial
- 97. Grand Teton National Park
- 98. Bryce Canyon National Park
- 99. Voyageurs National Park
- 100. Lowell National Historical Park

**1998**

- 101. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve (spring)
- 102. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (spring)
- 103. Cumberland Island National Seashore (spring)
- 104. Iwo Jima/Netherlands Carillon Memorials
- 105. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
- 106. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
- 107. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area
- 108. Acadia National Park

**1999**

- 109. Big Cypress National Preserve (winter)
- 110. San Juan National Historic Site, Puerto Rico (winter)
- 111. St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- 112. Rock Creek Park
- 113. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- 114. Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
- 115. Kenai Fjords National Park
- 116. Lassen Volcanic National Park
- 117. Cumberland Gap National Historical Park (fall)

**2000**

- 118. Haleakala National Park (spring)
- 119. White House Tour and White House Visitor Center (spring)
- 120. USS Arizona Memorial
- 121. Olympic National Park
- 122. Eisenhower National Historic Site
- 123. Badlands National Park
- 124. Mount Rainier National Park

**2001**

- 125. Biscayne National Park (spring)
- 126. Colonial National Historical Park (Jamestown)
- 127. Shenandoah National Park
- 128. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- 129. Crater Lake National Park
- 130. Valley Forge National Historical Park

**VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT PUBLICATIONS (continued)****2002**

- 131. Everglades National Park
- 132. Dry Tortugas National Park
- 133. Pinnacles National Monument
- 134. Great Sand Dunes National Monument & Preserve
- 135. Pipestone National Monument
- 136. Outer Banks Group (Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Ft. Raleigh National Historic Site, and Wright Brothers National Memorial)
- 137. Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and Sequoia National Forest
- 138. Catoctin Mountain Park
- 139. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
- 140. Stones River National Battlefield

**2003**

- 141. Gateway National Recreation Area: Floyd Bennett Field (spring)
- 142. Cowpens National Battlefield (spring)
- 143. Grand Canyon National Park – North Rim
- 144. Grand Canyon National Park – South Rim
- 145. C&O Canal National Historical Park
- 146. Capulin Volcano National Monument
- 147. Oregon Caves National Monument
- 148. Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site
- 149. Fort Stanwix National Monument
- 150. Arches National Park
- 151. Mojave National Preserve (fall)


**2004**

- 152. Joshua Tree National Park (spring)
- 153. New River Gorge National River
- 154. George Washington Birthplace National Monument
- 155. Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve
- 156. Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park
- 157. Apostle Island National Lakeshore
- 158. Keweenaw National Historical Park
- 159. Effigy Mounds National Monument
- 160. Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site
- 161. Manzanar National Historic Site
- 162. John Day Fossil Beds NM

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please visit the University of Idaho, Park Studies Unit website: <a href="http://www.psu.uidaho.edu">http://www.psu.uidaho.edu</a>
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